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LOVE'S PRAYER.

BY SUSIE M. BEST.

Summer winds are softly sighing,
Whispering to the leaves of love;
At thy feet my soul is lying,
All my thoughts to thee are flying,
How can I my passion prove?

High above me stars are shining,
Brightly beaming in the sky;
For thy love my soul is pining,
Round my heart my passion's twining,
Must I thus forever sigh?

From the rose the scent is stealing,
Wafted by the breeze to thee;
For thy mercy I'm appealing,
Low before thee see me kneeling,
Sweetheart let thy love bless me.

With Blinded Eyes.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A PIECE OF PATCHWORK," "SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER," "A MIDSUMMER FOLLY," "WEDDED HANDS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

SIX months later. Rowena, her aunt, and Leicester were in London now. They had gone there direct on their return from the Continent, having but one interest and one object—or so it would have seemed to an uninitiated observer.

The physician had pronounced Leicester's general condition very satisfactory, much improved by the course of treatment he had been patiently carrying out for six months, but still he would hold out no positive hope. The experiment was worth trying—that was the strongest expression they could draw from him.

They were in apartments for the time being, in a quiet street within a mile of the great oculist, and would remain there until the operation was performed.

Leicester had not thought of what they should do or where they should go afterwards; he had not seemed to think of that or of anything else just lately, except the great possibility which now loomed before him.

But Mrs. Wyoming had thought of it, and had already made up her mind as to her course of action.

On the morning of the operation she was so taken up with the considering and the reviewing of her plans that she could no longer keep them to herself,

Leicester was resting in his room. He was to be as quiet as possible both before and after the operation. The doctors were not to come for another two hours yet, and Mrs. Wyoming and Rowena were in their sitting room, the far-off roar of distant traffic reaching their ears faintly.

Aunt Annie was occupied quite comfortably and composedly over the fringing of a sofa-rug for Pattie's future home.

Rowena had attempted to work, but had relinquished the task as hopeless. She sat nervously clasping and unclasping her hands, her eyes fixed upon her aunt, though she saw nothing of she was doing. Her heart was beating heavily; she was almost faint with the continued dull vehemence of its throbs. She had been looking better until they returned home.

The change of scene had had a beneficial effect upon Rowena, in spite of her wretchedness.

Surrounded by strange beautiful things that, with all her wild imaginings, she had never dreamed of, she could not but be more or less diverted from the contemplation of her trouble.

Now, when the event upon which so many hopes and fears were depending was close at hand, she began to look haggard again.

Mrs. Wyoming was quick to notice her falling off, and to dread her possible state of mind, the more so as she said nothing.

But Rowena did not occupy her mind to the exclusion of all else; there were her daughter and her daughter's lover to be thought of; and as she sat working she was saying to herself, and not for the first time, that though Pattie's letters throughout her long absence had been perfectly satisfactory, it was decidedly strange that she and Errol Hayter should have come to no conclusion yet.

Her letters mentioned his coming and going, told of the new music he brought her, of plays and concerts they had attended in town—but that was all.

They ought to have been engaged long before this, and to have arranged to be married immediately on the return of the travellers.

She had not thought Errol Hayter would be a tardy suitor; she could not understand his delaying to speak.

Musing thus, she said presently to her silent companion—

"Charley will have to be so very quiet for a week or two after this that we shall have a nice opportunity of running over to Oxton to see Pattie."

Rowena did not reply. She wondered half indignantly how her aunt could concern herself over such trivialities when such a great event was impending; but she did not care to open her lips to say that or anything else.

Mrs. Wyoming looked up from her work and gazed at her niece.

"How wretched you look!" she said impatiently.

"Do I?" returned Rowena wearily. "Well, I think we both have cause to look wretched!"

"Do I look so, then?" inquired her aunt anxiously.

"Oh, no!"

There was a touch of sarcasm in the girl's tone, but it did not suit Mrs. Wyoming to notice it now. She went on in tones of mild exhortation—

"You are making a great deal too much of this Pattie. There is ground for anxiety, of course; but as to wretchedness—it is for want of real trouble—the way with young girls who do not know the pressure of actual care, and are morbidly determined to suffer."

Rowena looked at her, with burning indignation in her gaze. Her aunt apparently unheeding, continued—

"Whichever way it turns out I have a plan, so that there is really very little to worry about, seeing that we know we may rely upon his forbearance."

Rowena could hardly sit still and listen to this, but the next moment she had conquered her wrathful impulse.

What was the use of virtuous indignation—was she not sunk in iniquity as deeply as her companion, whose presence daily became more hateful to her as the punishment of their sin drew nearer?

Once she had thought herself better than her accomplice, because she loathed her sin; but now she considered that that very fact made her the worse, for she had sensibilities that her aunt did not possess, promptings to good which her aunt did not feel, and she was therefore so much the more wicked in her continued resistence to them.

"In the event of Charley's remaining blind, I should endeavor to arrange for your immediate marriage, as a consolation to him, and because there would be nothing else to be done. We could not go on for ever as we have been doing, of course—there would be no occasion or excuse for it."

Mrs. Wyoming spoke with a very matter-of-fact air indeed, holding her head on one side to judge of the effect of her wool-work.

Rowena stood up suddenly, her listless look gone, her pale face flushed.

"Aunt Annie," she said, "you may plan and arrange as you please, but I will never marry him! I will stop short of that. Nothing you can do or say shall alter my purpose!"

"Don't be ridiculous!" returned Mrs. Wyoming quite coolly, not even concerning herself to glance up from her work. "What else do you suppose you are going to do? How would you get out of the engagement?"

Then Rowena told her aunt of her views, and reminded her of the object she had had when she first stepped into Pattie's place. Mrs. Wyoming laughed.

"The very idea," she said, "of voluntarily relinquishing such an opportunity, for no reason at all——"

"For the best of reasons!" Rowena interrupted indignantly.

"When he is perfectly content," Mrs. Wyoming continued, "and there is everything in both of you to insure lasting happiness!"

"I could never be happy!" Rowena broke in again.

Mrs. Wyoming misunderstood this speech, and Rowena, on her part, had no idea that her aunt believed her to be still suffering from the pangs of disappointed love.

Just then the postman's knock was heard, and the arrival of a letter for herself turned Mrs. Wyoming's thoughts into another channel. In a few moments more she exclaimed—

"Rowena!" The girl knew that something very serious must have happened for Mrs. Wyoming to call her by her own name. "Read that!"—flinging the letter on to the girl's lap. "What can it mean?"

It was a brief letter from Errol Hayter, informing Mrs. Wyoming, with all due politeness, but with unmistakeable decision, that as all his efforts had failed to gain her daughter's affections he must resign his hope of winning her hand—the letter of an evidently incensed man.

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By the middle of the following day Mrs. Wyoming and her niece were in the train for Oxton.

The operation was over, and there had been no valid excuse to put off the journey, even had Rowena not sympathized with her aunt's new anxiety.

She was sorry for the unfortunate, and, so far, inexplicable termination of Errol's love-suit, but all other things were overshadowed by the one event which was now impending, and which meant so much to that blind man whose happiness she had learned to love more deeply than her own.

With all her heart now she hoped that he might see, since in either case he must suffer the loss of his love. He loved her now—she felt it.

He loved her for what she was, for her powers and capabilities that Pattie had never had.

Of course she knew that she was cleverer than simple Pattie, and she knew also that her higher intellect had attracted Leicester's mind as Pattie's beauty had once attracted his eyes.

She had instinct and powers of perception—she knew he loved her more than he had ever loved Pattie. And now she was to lose all that she had thus gained, first with care and pain, then with growing joy and tenderness as love ripened in her heart.

Her punishment was just. She bowed her head to it; she even felt a certain relief at times in the thought that she was thus to suffer.

Her aunt did not leave her long to herself. She questioned her concerning Errol Hayter's temper and peculiarities, and Rowena replied according to her knowledge of him.

He was generally very good-tempered, but had perhaps been rather spoiled, through being the only child. He had now and then taken offence at things she had said to him, but had always got over it soon.

"That might throw a little light upon it," Mrs. Wyoming mused anxiously, "if Pattie was the sort of girl to give offence carelessly. But then she isn't. It's a puzzle to me."

She sat in silence for a time, and Rowena's thoughts, set free for the moment, returned directly to the darkest room in the London street, to the figure on the couch with bandaged eyes, that they had left behind them.

Mrs. Wyoming had explained to Leicester that their absence for a few hours was unavoidable, and he begged she would not hasten her return on his account. Then Rowena had gone in and wished him good-bye, and he had drawn her face down to his as she bent over him.

"My darling!" was all that he had said; but she had interpreted those two words into multitude of hopes and fears and unspoken longings, and had come away with a heavy heart for the sorrowful disappointment that in either case awaited him.

As the train entered the Oxton station there was another train just departing from the opposite side of the platform.

There were not many people about, and they saw Pattie standing there, her back to them, in her pale blue summer dress, with a dark fur boa on her shoulder to keep out the autumn chill. She was speaking to someone in one of the third-class carriages.

"Whatever can Pattie be doing there?" exclaimed Mrs. Wyoming as she caught sight of her, starting up from her seat with her hand on the door.

But the train was still moving, preventing her from alighting, and she put her head out of the window, so as not to lose sight of her daughter.

"Rowena," she cried the next moment—"it's Dolph—it's Dolph Carbutt! He's putting his head out—he's waving his hand to her!"

Fortunately they were alone in the compartment.

"Don't let any one hear you," said Rowena, trying to pull her aunt back. "It will only make people notice her. Wait till the train stops, then we can speak to her."

"Yes; but he will be gone. Oh, if I could catch him!"

Mrs. Wyoming's face was crimson, her lips were quivering. Rowena had never before seen her so disturbed.

As their train came to a standstill Mrs. Wyoming sprang out of the carriage.

Pattie stood, not looking after the departing train, but gazing in bewilderment about her, as if puzzled to find her way out of the station amid the fresh bustle caused by the arrival of the second train, and there was hardly a man there who did not turn for a second glance at her lovely face.

Mrs. Wyoming hurried up to her and seized her arm.

"Pattie!" she gasped; and Pattie started, and then, meeting her mother's gaze, and seeing that she was found out, straightway burst into tears.

Mrs. Wyoming was exasperated, and Rowena, though sympathizing with Pattie, felt that she could shake her simple cousin; but she softened directly, remembering that Pattie would probably have something worth crying for before very long.

"Dear Pattie, don't!" she said, taking her hand. "You will make everything worse if you attract attention."

But Pattie cried on like any child, and her mother drew her away as quickly as possible, turning down a quiet lane that branched off from the space in front of the station in an opposite direction to the road leading to the Misses Hayter's house.

"People will think we came to capture an escaped lunatic!" thought Mrs. Wyoming irefully.

She had been less patient with her daughter of late, whether from irritation at the repeated failure of her plans, or because after Rowena's society Pattie's silliness was more apparent, it would be impossible to say. However it was, she did not spare hard words as they hastened with her down the lane out of sight of everybody.

They walked some distance out into the fields, for the weather was still dry and summer-like, and Mrs. Wyoming did not know where else to go, since the Misses understood the real state of affairs.

At last they came to a piece of low broken wall, and upon this Mrs. Wyoming sank down, exhausted with fatigue and wrath.

Rowena was dismayed at the violence she exhibited, and poor Pattie was so frightened and agitated that it was sometime before they could get anything definite from her; but, between piteous childish sobs and exclamations, she at last made a full confession.

Four months ago, during their absence abroad, she had been startled by the sudden appearance of Dolph Carbutt at her side, one day when she had gone alone into the next street to make a purchase.

He walked with her, and told her that he had made her mother believe he had gone to America, so as to throw her off her guard, and then—having first gone secretly to Estes, and ascertained that she was not there—he had kept watch in the neighborhood of the hotel where they had been staying.

After all he had come across her, quite by accident, in town with Errol Hayter and his aunts, on their return from a matinee, and had got in the same train and traced them to Oxton.

At this point Pattie cried again more helplessly than before, and when she recommenced her story they understood her fears.

She had now to confess the source of Dolph's power over her, which had prevented her writing to her mother, and asking for help to get rid of him.

In a moment of confidence she had told Dolph of Rowena's changing places with her, and he laughed very much over it, and enjoyed it at the time; but now he came to her and said that if she had anything more to do with the man he had seen her with he would let Leicester know the trick they had played on him.

This was his constant threat, and by it he induced her to meet him from time to time.

In an unguarded moment she had also let out the fact that Errol Hayter did not know she had been engaged to Dolph, and then he had threatened to tell Errol of it, and about their treatment of Leicester as well.

Thus he had held her powerless, since even if she had told any of her friends secretly, their first movement to her aid would have sent him at once to Errol Hayter and then to Leicester, so that all would have been lost.

She got Dolph to agree that she should not markedly discourage Errol at present, to avoid discovery by her mother, but she was not to encourage him.

Dolph said that she should marry him, and nobody else; he was poor now—he had an agency for something, she did not know what, but it was not very successful—and they must wait a year or two, but he would not give her up.

She had been so frightened when she was alone with him, and he got so excited and talked so fast that she had sometimes pretended to be willing—not always.

She had great difficulty in getting out alone to meet him sometimes, and when she failed he was so angry the next time that she promised anything for fear of him.

After that day when her mother had refused him an interview with her at the hotel he called again, and found that they had gone nobody knew where, and it was then that he thought of making them believe that he was departing for America.

After he had found her out she did not get on so well with Errol, not feeling at ease with him, and once or twice he was just going to speak, she was sure, and she managed to prevent him.

She cried every night when she got to her own room, and people said she looked ill, and the Misses Hayter and Errol were alarmed about her; but she did not dare to tell them what was the matter.

She took pains to write her letters just the same as usual; she was so frightened lest anything should be suspected.

Dolph always pretended, she said, to take great care that she should not get into difficulties through meeting him, but she could not help thinking that it was his fault that Errol saw them together at last on the previous Saturday afternoon, as he was coming up from the station two hours earlier that he had been expected.

They saw him before he saw them, and could have got out of his way, but Dolph seemed so stupid—he would not hasten—she thought he wanted Errol to find it out and give her up.

Errol went on, without attempting to speak to her, and when she went in as soon as she could afterwards she noticed directly a difference in his manner towards her.

After tea they were alone for a little while, and he asked her about Dolph—whose face he recognized as that of the young fellow he had seen with her at Estes—and she did not dare to say anything.

He asked her if he was her lover—then, if he was the cause of her changeable behavior to him of late.

She did not answer, but only cried; she was so miserable, and had been all those four months.

He said he had been very patient—that he had put off speaking again and again because she seemed to wish to hold him off—but there was a limit to his endurance. He had determined to win her if she was to be won; but if there was another in the field before him, of course he must accept his dismissal.

Then he urged her to say either Yes or No to him, and she did not dare to say Yes, and she could not bear to say No, so she cried and said nothing, and he waited a little while, and then went away and out of the house, very angry, saying something about "being played with."

Mrs. Wyoming hardly had patience enough to listen to her daughter's sobbing stammering recital; she had no sympathy with her difficulties, only considering that she had shown a folly worthy of a three-year-old child, as she told her bitterly.

But Rowena's compassion was fully aroused; she was more reasonable than her aunt, and saw plainly that if Pattie's simplicity was sometimes a charm it must at other times be a drawback, and that allowance must be made for it as part of a nature as unchangeable as everybody else's.

Besides, the girl's position had certainly been most difficult, and she did not see what else Mrs. Wyoming could have expected of her.

Dolph Carbutt had shown the usual persistence of a weak and cowardly disposition, which was difficult to deal with in his case, for he had nothing to lose in the game he was playing, and his opponent had so much at stake.

Rowena comforted her cousin on one side with gentle gestures and touches, unnoticed by Mrs. Wyoming, who stormed at her on the other, and the poor child—she was little more, though she was turned twenty-two—sat between them and cried helplessly.

Presently the angry mother, having emptied the vials of her wrath upon her daughter's head, turned her thoughts to the question of what she was going to do with her.

She was not long in deciding. She determined to take her away with her at once, and not to appear to be aware that anything was wrong.

The Misses Hayter knew that something had happened, Pattie said; they must have guessed it by Errol's going away so soon after tea without saying good-bye, and not coming again since; but she had not told them anything.

So they waited until Pattie had recovered her composure, and then went together to the pretty little house on the roadside, where Mrs. Wyoming cheerfully explained the maiden ladies how they had met Pattie on their way home from the station, and had gone for a short walk at once, fearing the fine weather would not last.

Then she proceeded to say that she had come on a rather particular errand. She and her niece were in town for a week or two, and they wished for Pattie's company during their stay.

There were changes coming in their family, and they wanted an opportunity of making arrangements together.

This was said with the object of preparing the Misses Hayter for losing their pretty boarder, for Mrs. Wyoming did not intend Pattie to return now that Dolph Carbutt had found out her hiding-place.

After tea they left, with good-byes that Pattie guessed were final though she was not yet aware of her mother's plans.

The maiden ladies did not guess it however, and they put down Pattie's tears to excitement or weakness. They frankly told Mrs. Wyoming that she had not looked well for some time, and they had only refrained from informing her because they knew she could not leave her sick friend in Germany, and they thought it a pity to trouble her uselessly.

All the way to town Rowena was wondering what her aunt intended to do with Pattie now.

She thought that perhaps she would not trouble to find her another refuge until the result of the operation should be known, as they might all have to take their departure rather suddenly.

It was dark when they got home, though not late.

Leicester was lying on his couch, in a sound sleep. The house had been kept very still since the day before, on his account, the landlady being a kind-hearted woman and deeply interested in his condition, and they were admitted so quietly that he was not disturbed.

Their sitting-rooms were on the first floor, and he was in the back one, a smaller room with only a view of chimney-pots and yards, the apartments being divided by folding doors with heavy velvet curtains hanging across them.

The next morning Mrs. Wyoming was down in good time, and sent Leicester's breakfast up to his room before he could appear, with a message begging him to stay quietly in bed and rest—it must be so much better for him.

She seemed to have quite recovered her composure, and chatted cheerfully to her daughter and niece during breakfast, and promised to take them to a concert that evening if Charley seemed not to need them.

Rowena did not at all like the idea of leaving him to himself again for some hours, but she made no objection then, trusting that something might happen in the meantime to change their plans.

A message came down from Leicester, to the effect that he felt very well, and should be with them in another half-hour, at which intelligence Rowena flushed and Pattie looked frightened.

"Don't be alarmed," said Mrs. Wyoming, looking from one to the other of them and nodding oracularly. "I shall manage it. Of course he must know that you—Rowena—have returned to stay with us while we are in town"—to Pattie. "You would not like to have to sit perfectly still, without moving or speaking, for a whole fortnight, so that he should not find out you were there, would you?"—with a playfulness of manner that set Pattie at her ease again.

"Pattie, dear, I am going to ask a favor of you," said Mrs. Wyoming to her niece after breakfast. "I want these wools matched; in fact, I cannot go on with the rug until I get some more dark-red. You know the shop where we got the last—I should be so glad if you would take the omnibus and go and get some. I know you don't mind going about London alone or I wouldn't ask you."

"Of course I will go," replied Rowena, with ready good temper, though she was a little disappointed that she should not be there to greet Charley when he came down-stairs, for she had not seen him since the previous morning.

Her aunt however would tell him why she was absent, she thought, and he would be just as pleased to meet her when she returned.

Mrs. Wyoming kept apologising for sending her, which rather surprised the girl, as she was not accustomed to being treated with very much ceremony by her aunt.

"Rowena is going to write for me," she said, preserving the assumed personalities of the two girls as carefully as though Leicester were within hearing, "for she might have gone with you."

"Oh, I can go just as well alone!" her niece replied; and she made haste to set off, that she might the sooner be back again.

On her return the servant who admitted her requested her to go straight up to Mrs. Wyoming's bedroom, as she wished to speak to her.

Rowena, rather alarmed, inquired if Mr. Leicester was any worse, and maid said she thought not; he had come down, and was in the small drawing-room

Rowena went up to her aunt's room, her heart beating fast with vague apprehension.

Pattie was there, standing at the window. Mrs. Wyoming was very busy—or feigning to be so—with some dresses that lay across the bed.

"Oh, there you are," she said, as her niece appeared, with what seemed like an effort of amiability.

Rowena supposed that she was still struggling with the vexation aroused by the events of the day before, for her manner had not been natural ever since her first anger had spent itself.

"And did you match the red? That's right"—hardly waiting for a reply—"and I am so much obliged to you. Now, Pattie, you can take them down, and be getting the skeins ready out for me. We shall join you in a few minutes."

The fact of her aunt's addressing Pattie by her own name did not escape Rowena's notice, but she thought it was only a slip of the tongue.

Pattie went on, casting a curious glance at her cousin, as she took the parcel of wool from her.

"Is anything the matter?" Rowena inquired of her aunt brusquely, before the door was closed again.

"I hope not," answered Mrs. Wyoming. "I hope that things will go on better now than I thought yesterday they ever could again."

"Why, what is it?" asked the girl, sitting down, as though the better to bear a blow, though she did not know why her heart should throb thus unreasonably simply because her aunt's manner was a little constrained.

She watched her as she stood by the bed examining flounces, and rubbing off marks with a soft brush.

"What is it?" Mrs. Wyoming repeated, pausing from her occupation, and looking up with sudden cheerfulness. "It is a new arrangement that has occurred to me, by which we may all be safe, and nothing be known, whether Charley recovers his sight or not."

Rowena leaned forward listening intently.

"Pattie has been very foolish in placing us all in that bad young man's power," Mrs. Wyoming proceeded. "Think of the danger we have been in all this time! I have talked to her again this morning very seriously, and I think I have shown her how gravely culpable she has been. She has lost a really good chance—quite lost it, I fear. She cannot go on so. Youth and beauty do not last for ever, I tell her, and I do believe she is impressed with a sense of her own folly, and is ready to do what she can to make up for it."

"But what has that to do with Charley?" broke in Rowena rather impatiently.

"This"—majestically, resenting the interruption—"the one catastrophe may avert the other. If Charley recovers his sight she will take her old place with him, and he will never know that she left him."

CHAPTER XII.

AUNT ANNIE!

Having relieved her feelings by this ejaculation, Rowena kept still to recover her breath.

"Why, wouldn't that be better than running away in disgrace?" said Mrs. Wyoming cheerfully, seeming relieved now that her new plan was made known. "Only in the event of his seeing, you understand."

"But—but don't you think he would find out?" Rowena stammered.

"Well, he didn't when you took her place," returned Mrs. Wyoming airily.

Rowena looked at her, but her aunt would not notice the glance. It suited her now to ignore the difference there was between Rowena taking Pattie's place, and Pattie taking Rowena's, and her niece was not sufficiently ready to speak in her own interest to remind her of it, and define that difference to her own advantage.

But all the same she was conscious of it; it was impossible not to know who had raised the blind man out of the slough of despond, and had filled his

mind with new ideas, and met his mental needs while she ministered to his physical comfort.

"So I thought it would be a good opportunity," Mrs. Wyoming went on, "now I have Pattie on my hands again, for her sometimes to return, just for a few minutes at a time, to her former footing with him. When he speaks to you I wish her sometimes to reply—do you see? It is safer for her to do so in your presence, because if he should seem puzzled, you can speak the next time, and reassure him at once. Don't stare like that, Rowena—it really is very rude! Being shut up with a blind man has kept you awfully uncivilized about many things!"

"I—I was so surprised!" said Rowena, relaxing the gaze which she had fixed upon her aunt.

"You seem so," responded her aunt tartly.

Mrs. Wyoming was surprised too, and not agreeably, at the alternating flush and pallor which swept over her niece's face.

"Then I thought," she continued, "if all this happened, as I am now supposing, you could then be spared to go and pay your friends at Lyngate Rectory a long visit. They would be pleased to have you, I have no doubt."

She held this out as bait, though she had begun to doubt, from Rowena's looks, whether it would prove to be such. The girl's face told her the truth in a moment.

Rowena remained as if she had not heard, save that her pallor increased and her chest heaved convulsively.

"I—I think," she said at last brokenly—"I think he'd find it out!"

"But he has not," opposed her aunt cheerfully. "We have put him to the test!"

"You have tried to——tried if——"

She could not finish the sentence, but sat staring at Mrs. Wyoming harder than ever; and this time that lady made no remonstrance.

"I thought it best to make the trial at once, before Pattie had time to think about it, and get nervous and silly as she does," said Mrs. Wyoming, rather awkwardly. "When he came down-stairs I went forward to meet him, taking her with me; and when I had asked after his health I merely said—'Here is Pattie, anxious to see you again after being away all day yesterday.' Pattie made some simple suitable inquiry after his welfare, and he replied. It went off as easily as possible. I did not leave her with him; I would not subject the dear child to too great a strain, after what she has recently gone through. I said I could not spare her just then, and that if he would lie down on the sofa and rest for a little while we would join him very soon. You can go in first, you know, and speak to him—then it will be right, and he won't miss anything in Pattie's manner."

Rowena grasped her aunt's meaning in a moment, bewildered though she was at the sudden change in the aspect of affairs.

She was to be Leicester's betrothed in all tete-a-tetes, where demands might be made which Pattie could not meet, while on other occasions Pattie was to take her place, so that any difference of manner should be rendered indistinguishable.

In that way they would be prepared for either emergency.

She was silent for a while, but not with admiration at her aunt's *finesse*.

"But if that succeeded now," she said presently, when she had found her voice, "how would it do by-and-by when I was not there to—to be with him sometimes?"

"Oh, very well, I hope!" replied her aunt calmly. "He was always very fond of her. I do not expect him to be any less so now."

"But—the studies—the French and German conversations, and the other things. He will expect—— She does not know much about those things——"

"Oh," Mrs. Wyoming interposed, "if he recovers his sight he won't want to be grubbing over dry books all day, of course! He will understand that Pattie only did that to fill up his time when he had nothing better to do, and won't expect it of her. They will be going out a good deal, I should think, after their marriage—and before it there will be no time for study—I will see to that!"

Rowena was dumb with a sense of cruel injury, a wild impulse to resist even to violence.

He was hers now—won by her own efforts. How dared they think of taking him from her?

But in the same moment a voice whispered to her that this was the consequence of casting in her lot with evil.

She was in her aunt's power, to be used as an instrument; she had placed herself there, and she must abide the result.

Pattie was Leicester's chosen one; he himself would disclaim all love for the ugly red-haired Rowena could he see her—yes, though she had succored him in his extremity, and had given up her life to him when she had longed to spend it in other ways.

But she lifted up her voice in one more protest. The tumult in her heart was getting beyond her control; her tones were thick and shaken with passion as she spoke.

"Dolph Carbutt," she said—"you forget him. He will let Charley know all about it when he finds he has lost her."

"Do you think I should reckon without him?" returned her aunt scornfully. "The wedding would take place very soon and would be very quiet on that account, and they would go abroad immediately, before he could hear of it. He does not know where we are now; and he could only go to Eales to look for us, and there he will look in vain. If I cannot keep Dolph Carbutt or any one else at bay for a month I'm not worth much! They would stay for some time out of England—we should, I might say, for I should probably go with them, to keep a look-out for dangerous people."

"But Charley might not like living abroad," objected Rowena, her speech interrupted by catches of her breath that sounded almost like sobs. "And whenever you come back Dolph will be on the watch, ready to disgrace you for ever in his eyes—or he might find out where you had gone, and follow you, and tell him. You would never be safe!"

The girl's eyes were dilated; her face that had been so ghastly pale was now crimson; her lips were quivering.

Mrs. Wyoming left off folding her dresses and advanced towards her niece with an air of triumph, which made Rowena shrink back.

"Rowena," she said impressively, "you leave one thing entirely out of the question in your arguments—the most important thing of all. You forget Pattie's beauty, which Charley simply worshipped—and worships still, poor fellow, in memory, and now in the hope of seeing it again. Perhaps, not possessing it yourself, you don't realise the power of it. Do you suppose that Dolph Carbutt's story—should it at last reach Charley's ears—do you suppose that any requirements of your own could stand for one moment before Pattie's face? For that he would forgive all and forget all. If it came to the worst she would only have to confess that her courage had failed her for a time—he would forgive her all. Even were he vindictive—which I know he is not—she would be his wife, and where would be the use of proclaiming his resentment to the world! But we need not glance at the matter from that point of view—the other one covers all possibilities!"

If her object had been to crush Rowena she had attained it, in bringing vividly before the girl's mind the changes that would come with Leicester's restored sight.

Until now she had not realized thoroughly that Pattie's loveliness would be likely to have the same effect upon him as it had had before his blindness, and that he probably cared more for that than for any enjoyment he had ever derived from a greater intellect.

She saw now that though she had gained a love that Pattie had not awakened in him, Pattie would be able to keep it now it was gained, with the power of her own beauty and a little judicious aid from her mother.

Rowena felt thoroughly abased. She had thought she could stand in places where Pattie would fall; she had thought she could do things that were beyond Pattie's power; and now she found that her cousin would conquer everywhere by the beauty that had been denied to herself.

"It is part of my punishment!" the girl moaned almost unconsciously.

"What?" queried her aunt sharply, not catching the murmur, and not at all liking the sound of that smothered cry, like that of one struck to the heart.

She did not want to think that she had made a mistake, and that Rowena had grown to care for Charley, though at the same time she assured herself that she was not putting Pattie in her way—if he were to see again Rowena could be nothing to him.

The girl had been very useful to her, and she had learned to admire her qualities more than she would have cared to confess, and it pleased her to consider that by thus acting she would be giving her a chance of winning Errol Hayter's affections at the rebound.

"I—I'm going to take off my things," said Rowena hoarsely, rising from her chair and stumbling forward.

She went away, and Mrs. Wyoming began to hang up her dresses, with fresh lines of anxiety drawing her brows together.

Rowena's evident feeling for Leicester might add very much to her difficulties, unless the girl's nature proved strong enough and noble enough to stand this last great strain.

Rowena was her gentle-mannered self again by the time she was on her way down-stairs.

She had remembered that she must not give way—that she must be firm to the end, for the sake of both those whom she loved.

She must not think of herself at all—she was of no consequence, and made only to help other people—and now she might have it in her power to save her dearest that sharp pang she had been dreading for him.

It was her duty to keep firm, and make a last effort on his behalf by gradually bringing herself nearer to Pattie's level again, so that the contrast might not puzzle or pain him.

This was what she was thinking as she went down to the back drawing-room, crushing out all thoughts of herself, learning her hard lesson humbly, unconsciously perhaps.

Leicester was lying on the sofa, his face turned towards the door.

"Pattie," he called softly, directly she opened it; and she went and knelt down by his side. "I thought you would come as soon as you could," he said, putting his arm round her shoulders. "I was disappointed when your mother came in with you just now," he added.

"How are you now, dear?" she asked, forgetting that Pattie had already put that question.

But he did not seem to notice it; it probably had a different significance when put in that manner.

"And so you've brought your cousin back with you!" he continued presently, somewhat to her dismay, for she could not tell how much he knew, but now supposed that her aunt had told him some story about "Rowena's" return.

While she paused to think what she might venture to say he unconsciously gave her the cue.

"Your mother has told me all about that fellow Carbutt's giving her up, and running after one of the girls at the school who had money. I call it abominable, and I wish I could stand up like a man and take her part for her!"

His face was so concealed that its expression could hardly be judged of, but Rowena imagined the look of impatient pain that swept across it.

"Never mind," she whispered, "you may be able to do it soon, if necessary."

It was the first word of encouragement she had given him in his new hope.

"Yes," he assented, his lips curving into a smile. "But don't you call it a scoundrel's trick, Pattie, to behave like that, and then get her blamed for the whole affair?"

"Yes; he has been entirely the cause of her leaving."

She felt that she could safely and truthfully say as much as this.

"I should like to give him a thrashing, and perhaps I shall by-and-by!" he pursued.

"Oh, I hope we sha'n't see any more of him," she returned. "We shall get her something else as soon as we can, and then I hope we shall forget all about him. It is not pleasant to think of."

"But perhaps she won't forget," he suggested. "Does she—is she much cut up about it?"

"Well," she replied, with that inward bitterness with which she was accustomed to speak of herself when questioned about "Rowena," but which was not noticeable in her quiet soft tones, "you know that Rowena is not one to show her feelings. She will receive no sympathy from us; but I should imagine she will not concern herself for long about one as unworthy as he!"

"I hope not," he said, with contempt. "I always said he was far too good for him, and now my judgment has been proved correct. There she is, with your mother, on the stairs. One kiss, my dear one, before they come in!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

A LITTLE BOOK.—The library of a Manchester (England) bibliomaniac contains a copy of one of the tiniest volumes ever engraved, painted and bound. This "Little Jewel for the Ladies" measures 1.1 inch in height by .75 inch in width, contains 32 leaves or 64 plates, is covered in crimson and gilt roan, and has gilt edges. It was published in "Paris, at the Black Cat, 82 Saint Denis street," but when or by whom cannot be made out from the fly leaf.

WINNING A BRIDE.—An old belief says that if a man in Ireland on Hallow-eve creeps under the long trailing branches of the briar on which blackberries grow, he will see the shadow of the girl he is to marry; but he must first pronounce some words too awful to be written down, for they come from the Evil Spirit's teaching. And if a gambler hides under the tendrils of the briar, and invokes the aid of the Prince of Darkness, he will have luck at cards, no matter what color he bets on. But the words he uses are too diabolical to repeat; only a witch woman can utter them, and she whispers the spell into the ears of the men at dead of night, none hearing her.

THE HAWTHORN.—The French have a tradition that the hawthorn utters cries and groans on Good Friday. This probably arose from a belief that it was with the hawthorn that our Saviour was crowned. Sir John Maundeville bears this out by quaintly saying: "Then was Our Lord yled into a gardeyn, and there the Jewes scorned hym and made hym a crown of the branches of the albiespyne, that is whitethorn, that grew in the same gardeyn, and settyn yt upon his heaed. And therefore hath the whitethorn many virtues. For he that beareth a branch on hym thereof, no thundre, ne no maner of tempest may dere hym, ne in the howse that yt ye ynne may non evill ghost enter."

JEWISH SUPERSTITIONS.—Various are the superstitions which continue to keep a firm hold on the Jews in many parts of the East, notwithstanding the spread of education, and one of them was put to an odd use in Smyrna. It is a custom in that city whenever one of twins dies for the parents to fasten a padlock, and then either to voluntarily lose the key, or carefully hide it in some secluded spot, the popular belief being that the surviving twin will die the moment the padlock is opened. A young woman who had lost her twin brother married, and her husband came into possession of the padlock. One day a dispute occurred between the pair, and the husband, angry and unable to convince his wife, threatened that he would open the padlock. The threat at once brought the wife to reason. She tearfully submitted, and implored her husband to keep the padlock closed.

WHEN THE KING DRINKS.—Whenever King Dua, of the interior of Africa, took a drink of palm wine, or ate his meals, one of his wives, produced a hard brown nut, about the size of an egg, with one end cut off, and the inside hollowed out. This nut he slowly placed on the great toe of his left foot; this done, the palm wine or food was placed before him, and a slave boy came and stood behind him with a hand-bell. Every time he took a mouthful of food, or a drink of palm wine, he rapped the bottom of the canoe with the nut on his great toe, while a tinkle on the bell announced to all whom it might concern that Dua of Ikolungu was eating or drinking, as the case might be. He went through the same ceremony when smoking, taking a long pull at his pipe for every rap of his toe and tinkle on the bell.

THE KNIGHT AND HIS HORSE.—Near the great English dockyard, Sheerness, is the tomb of Sir Robert de Shurland, with the horse's head carved thereon, which commemorates the legend of the knight who killed a priest and swam his horse far out in the whirling tide to reach the king's ship as it passed by, and demand the Royal pardon for his crime. The courage of horse and rider extorted the desired pardon, and the noble beast brought its rider safe to land, when an old witch met them with a curse on her lips—the beast which had saved the forfeited life of the knight should one day cause his death. To falsify the curse, the knight slew the horse on the spot; and long after its bones lay there on the beach, all blanched and whitened by the weather, till the knight, passing that way, went to kick the skull into the sea, when a fragment of bone pricking his foot the wound mortified, and he died soon after.

REGRETS.

BY L. M. S.

Oh! I would that my words were unspoken,
That my lips breathed low in your ear;
For the love they so fondly betoken,
No longer seems to me too dear.
It has vanished as dew on the roses,
Killed by keen unkindness chill:
That each missive of yours so discloses,
And wonder it clings to you still.

Oh! I would that I could forget you,
Could banish you far from my heart;
But, alas! I so blindly have let you
Become of my own live a part,
That securely your pedestal holds you—
Enshrined there, all others above;
Where Love's essence, and spirit enfold you,
As if sheltered by wings of a dove!

FOR LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NULL AND VOID," "MADAM'S WARD," "THE HOUSE IN THE CLOSE," "WHITE BARRIER AND RED," "ONLY ONE LOVE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLI.

A LITTLE bustle was heard outside the door; and then the Doctor came in. He was a middle-aged man, tall, spare, thoughtful-looking, a little abrupt in manner, but with a kindly face.

He had not advanced two steps into the room before he stopped short, held up his hand, and said:

"Hallo—what's that?"

It was the patient's voice uplifted in delirious talk.

"Cynthia!" they distinctly heard him calling. "Where's Cynthia? Tell Cynthia that she must come!"

"And why are you not there?" said the Doctor, darting his finger in Cynthia's direction. "Why don't you go to him at once? It's madness to let him cry out like that!"

Cynthia's look was piteous; but for the moment she did not move.

"Would it not be better for a qualified nurse to be obtained for my brother?" said Mrs. Vane. "This young—lady has had no experience in nursing; and it is surely not necessary——"

"Oh, Doctor," the girl burst out, "must I not stay? I cannot go away when he calls me like that!"

Her hands were strained on her bosom; her eyes had the hungry look of a mother who hears her child cry aloud and cannot go to him.

The Doctor shot a look at her pale tortured face, and observed the cold composure of the finely-dressed lady in the arm-chair and the subdued uneasiness of the old gentleman in the background.

He began to suspect a tragedy—at any rate a romance.

"Go to him at once," he said to Cynthia, pointing to the bed-room door, "and keep him quiet at any cost! A trained nurse would not do him half the good that you can do him, if you choose. And now, madam," he continued rather sternly, as Cynthia disappeared with a joyful face into Hubert's sick-room, "may I ask what this interference with my orders may mean?"

"I am Mr. Lepel's sister," said Flossy coldly, "and it was I who sent for you, Doctor Middlemass. I think I have some right to take an interest in my brother's condition."

"Certainly, madam"—the Doctor spoke with portentous grimness and formality—"but—excuse me—no right to tamper with any of my prescriptions. I prescribed Miss West to my patient: and she was doing him all the good in the world when I went away. He has another fever-fit upon him now, a little higher temperature, and we shall not be able to do anything more for him at all. If you do not wish my orders to be followed, madam, have the goodness to send for another doctor, and I will throw up the case."

"You misunderstand, sir—you misunderstand!" said the General fussily, coming forward with his most imposing air. "My wife and I, sir, have not the slightest desire to interfere. We only wish to know what your prescriptions are. That young woman, sir, has not right to be here anyhow."

"From what I have heard," said the Doctor drily, "I should have said that she had the greatest possible right to be here; but, however, that is no business of mine. She has a wonderful soothing effect on Mr. Lepel's condition, and, as long as she is here, he is quiet and manageable. Listen! He is scarcely speaking at all now; her presence and her touch have calmed him at once. It would be positive madness to take her away!"

"Would it not be well," said Mrs. Vane quietly, "to send a trained nurse here too? There is a woman whom I know; she would be very glad to come, and she would relieve that young lady of the more painful and onerous portions of her task. I mean, dear," she said, looking towards her husband, "old Mrs. Meldreth's daughter—Sabina. She is an efficient nurse, and she has nothing to do just now."

"Has she had experience in cases of brain-disease?" said Doctor Middlemass snappishly.

"I really do not know."

She knew perfectly well that Sabina's knowledge of nursing was of the most perfunctory kind.

"She has had experience of all kinds of illness, I believe, and she is thoroughly trustworthy. She could easily be installed here as an attendant on Miss—Miss West."

Attendant! "As spy," she meant, on all poor Cynthia's movements.

"I should like to see the woman first," said the Doctor bluntly.

He was not easy to manage, as Flossy swiftly perceived.

"If she is competent for the task, I have no objection—Miss West must not be allowed to overdo herself; but I myself should prefer very much to send a person who is accustomed to deal with illness of this kind."

"As you please, of course," said Flossy quietly.

She saw that it would be of no use to press Sabina Meldreth upon him, much as she would have liked to secure the services of a good spy and informer in the house. As she paused the General came forward.

"I should like to know, sir," he said bristling with indignation, "what you mean by saying that that young lady—that girl—has a right to be here? I do not understand such language!"

"Why, of course she has a right to be here," said the Doctor, staring at him in a purposely matter-of-fact way, "since she is the lady that he is engaged to marry."

"Marry! Bless my soul—no such thing!" roared the General, utterly forgetting that there was an invalid in the adjoining room. "Why, he's going to marry my ——"

"Dear Richard, hush, hush!" said his wife, laying her hand entreatingly upon his arm. "Don't make such a noise—think of poor Hubert!"

"Kindly moderate your voice, sir," was the Doctor's dry remark. "My patient will hear you if you don't exercise a little more care."

"It does not matter to me whether he hears me or not," the old General began again.

Flossy's hand tightened its grasp upon his arm in a way which he knew that he must obey.

The General was a docile husband, and his protest died away in inarticulate angry murmurs.

"Don't trouble about it, General—I will arrange everything," said his wife caressingly. "Go over to the window again and leave me to speak to Doctor Middlemass for a moment."

The General retired, still growling to himself, she half smiled, and raised her eyes to the Doctor's face as if she invited sympathy.

But the Doctor looked as unresponsive as a block of wood.

"I must go to my patient," he said. "It was to see him, I presume, that I was summoned?"

"Not entirely," said Flossy sweetly. "We wanted to know whether it was absolutely necessary that Miss West should stay with my brother."

"Absolutely necessary, madam!" he said sharply.

"Then of course we should not think of objecting to her presence then, which, I must tell you, is very painful to us because——"

"Excuse me, madam," said the Doctor, who was certainly a very uncivil person, "if I say that these family-matters are of no interest to me, save as they effect my patient."

"But they do effect your patient, Doctor. I think it was the worry of the affair that brought on this illness. We have found out that this Miss West's name is really 'Westwood,' and she is the daughter of the dreadful man who shot my husband's brother at Beechfield some years ago. Perhaps you remember the case?"

"Oh, yes—I remember it!" said the Doctor shortly. "That's the daughter? Poor girl!"

"It is naturally unpleasant to think that my brother—a cousin also of the General's—should be contemplating a marriage with her."

"Ah, well—perhaps so! We are all under the dominion of personal and selfish prejudices," said the Doctor.

"I hoped that this illness might break the tie between them," sighed Flossy pensively.

"So it may, madam—by killing him. Do you wish to break it in that manner?"

"This Doctor is a perfect brute!" she said to herself.

She only looked in a reproachful way at the "brute" and applied her handkerchief to her eyes.

"I trust that there is no likelihood that it may end in that way. My poor dear Hubert," she sighed, "if only you had been warned in time!"

Perhaps this display of emotion softened Doctor Middlemass's heart, or perhaps he was not so insensible to Mrs. Vane's charms as he tried to appear; at any rate, when he spoke again it was in a qualified tone.

"I trust that he will get over this attack. He is certainly a little better than I expected to find him; but I cannot impress your mind too strongly with the necessity for care and watchfulness. Anything that tends to tranquillise the mind of a person in his condition must be procured for him at almost any risk. When the delirium has passed, an ordinary nurse may be of greater use than Miss West; but at present we really cannot do without her. You heard for yourself how he called her when she went out of the room?"

"Yes, I heard. Then shall I send the woman of whom I spoke, Doctor? She might be a help to Miss West, whose work I of course would rather assist than retard in any way."

"You can thoroughly rely upon her?" the Doctor asked.

"Thoroughly. She is a most valuable person."

"She might come for a day or two, and we shall very soon see whether she is of any use or not. I suppose you will send for her?"

Yes, Mrs. Vane would send. And then the Doctor went to look once more at Hubert, of whose condition he again seemed somewhat doubtful; and afterwards he took his leave.

When he had gone Mrs. Vane also departed, taking her docile husband back with her to the Grosvenor Hotel.

She had gained her point and was secretly triumphant; for she had secured the presence of a spy upon Cynthia, and could depend upon Sabina Meldreth to give a full account of Miss West's habits and visitors.

Flossy had great faith in her system of espionage.

She sent Parker at once with a note summoning Sabina to the hotel, and there she laid her plans.

Sabina was to go that very night to Mr. Lepel's rooms, and was to make herself as useful as she could.

It was presumed that Cynthia had not seen her with sufficient clearness for the encounter to be a source of danger the woman in black who had followed Westwood to Kensington Gardens.

Sabina was told to keep herself in the background as much as possible—to be silent and serviceable, but, above all, to be observant; for it was likely that Westwood would try to communicate with his daughter, and, if he did so Sabina would be able to track him down.

Flossy had completely lost all fear for herself in the excitement of her discovery.

It seemed to her that she and her secret were entirely safe. Nobody, she thought, had ever known of her understanding with Sydney Vane in days gone by; nobody had any clue to the secret of his death; so long as Hubert was silent, she had nothing at all to fear; and Hubert had succumbed to her so long that she did not dread him now.

Nothing seemed to her more unlikely than that after so many years he should deliberately divest himself of name and fame, clear Westwood's reputation at the cost of his own, and sacrifice his freedom for the sake of a scruple of conscience.

Flossy did not believe him foolish enough or self-denying enough to do all that—and in her estimate of her brother's character perhaps, after all, Flossy was right.

Sabina Meldreth presented herself to Cynthia and Mrs. Jenkins that evening, and was not very graciously received.

However, she proved herself both capable and willing, and was speedily acknowledged—by Mrs. Jenkins, at least—to be "a great help in the house."

Cynthia said nothing; she hardly seemed to know that a stranger was present. Her whole soul was absorbed in the task of nursing Hubert.

When she slept, she did not leave the house; she lay on a sofa in another room. She could not bear to be far away from Hubert; and more and more, as the days went on and the delirium was not subdued, did she shrink from the knowledge that any other ears beside her own should hear the ravings of the patient—should marvel at the extraordinary things he said, and wonder whether or not there was any truth in them.

"He talks in this way because he has brooded over my poor father's fate!" Cynthia said to herself, with piteous insistence. "He must have been so much distressed at finding that I was the daughter of Andrew Westwood that his mind dwelt on all the details of the trial; and now he fancies almost that he did the deed himself. I have read of such strange delusions in books. When he is better the delusion will die away. It shows how powerfully his mind was affected by what I told him—the constant cry that he sees no way out of it shows how he must have brooded over the matter. No way out of it indeed, my darling, until the person who murdered Mr. Vane is discovered and brought to justice! And I almost believe that my father is right, and that the murderer, directly or indirectly, was Mrs. Vane.

To Cynthia, Hubert's ravings were the more painful because they bore almost entirely upon the great grief—the tragedy—of her life.

He spoke much of Sydney Vane, of Florence, and of Cynthia herself, but in such strange connection that at times she hardly knew what was his meaning, or whether he had any definite meaning.

Presently however it appeared to her as if one or two ideas ran through the whole warp and woof of his imagination.

One was the conviction that in some way or another he must take Westwood's place—give himself up to justice and set Westwood free.

Another was the belief that it was utterly impossible for Cynthia ever to forgive him for what he had done, and that the person chiefly responsible for all the misery and shame and disgrace which had fallen so unequally on the heads of those concerned in "the Beechfield tragedy" was no other than Florence Vane.

Farther than these vague statements he did not go. He never said in so many words that he was guilty of Sydney Vane's death, and that he, and not Westwood, ought to have borne the punishment.

Yet he said enough to give Cynthia cause for great unhappiness. She tried not to believe that there was any foundation of truth for his words; but she could not succeed.

The ideas were too persistent, too logical, to be altogether the fruit of imagination.

More and more she clung to the belief that Flossy was responsible for Mr. Vane's sudden death, that Hubert knew it, and that for his sister's sake he had concealed the truth.

If this were so, it would be terrible indeed; and yet Cynthia had a soft corner in her heart for a man who had sacrificed his own honor to conceal his sister's sin.

Cynthia did not go back to Madame della Scala's house.

Flossy had done her work with the singing-mistress as she had done it elsewhere. She blackened Cynthia's name wherever she went.

So, two days after the girl's departure from Norton Square, her boxes and all her belongings were sent to her from her former home without a word of apology or explanation.

She felt that she was simply turned out of Madame's house—that she could never hope to go back to it again.

She was now absolutely homeless; and she was also without employment; for she had withdrawn from several engagements to sing at concerts, and at more than one private house she had received an intimation that her services would be dispensed with.

No reason in these cases was given; but it was plain that the world did not think Miss West a very reputable person, and that society had turned its back upon her.

Cynthia had no leisure to think what this would mean for her in the future: at present she cared for nothing but her duties in Hubert Lepel's sick-room.

Her boxes were deposited at last in Mrs. Jenkins's little house at the back; and there a small room was appropriated to Cynthia's use.

She was "supposed to be lodging at Mrs. Jenkins's," as Sabina told her mistress; but she practically lived in Hubert's rooms.

Still it was a comfort to her to think of a little room to retire to when Hubert should recover consciousness; but till then she did not care where or how she lived.

Sabina found little to report to Mrs. Vane, who had now returned to Beechfield.

Cynthia went nowhere, and received neither visitors nor letters.

She had been interviewed by the police-officials; but they had not been able to get any information from her.

As for Andrew Westwood, he seemed to have disappeared from the face of the earth; and some of the authorities at Scotland Yard went so far as to say that the report made to them of his discovery must have been either an illusion of the fancy or pure invention on the part of Sabina Meldreth and Mrs. Vane.

CHAPTER XLII.

ENID'S conscience was not at rest. During her interviews with Mr. Evandale she was inclined to think that he knew everything, understood everything—even the difference between right and wrong—better than she herself knew and understood it; but when she was away her heart failed her.

What if Hubert cared for her all the time?

Would she not then be doing him a grievous wrong by forgetting that she had promised to marry him when she was twenty-one?

The General's opposition to her engagement would probably vanish like a dream when she was a little older, if she and Hubert showed an inclination to each other.

There was no real reason why they should not marry; and Hubert knew that well enough.

And what would he say when he heard that she had weakly fallen in love with another man, and wanted to break her word to himself?

Enid shrank back and blushed with shame at the prospect before her.

It was all very well for Maurice to say that she must not sacrifice herself; but was it not a woman's duty to sacrifice herself for the good of others? She said so to Maurice; and his answer was very ready.

"For the good of others? But do you think it is for Hubert's good to marry a woman who does not love him, and especially if it is a woman whom he does not love?"

"Ah, if I could only be sure of that!" sighed Enid.

She was not long left in doubt. The General could not keep a secret; and, as soon as he and his wife returned to Beechfield, Enid felt that something was wrong—something she thought which concerned herself.

Flossy was very quiet; she eyed Enid strangely once or twice, but she did not tell her about any of the events of the past week.

It was the General who sighed over her, petted her, missed her at unusual times, and looked at her with an air of pity that the girl found almost intolerable.

After three or four days of it, she broke through her usual rule of reserve, and asked Flossy what the General meant.

"You had better ask him," said Mrs. Vane.

"I have asked him, and he will not tell me."

"I suppose it is simply that Hubert is ill. He thinks probably that you are distracted by anxiety about him."

Enid colored guiltily.

"But we have good accounts of him," she said, as if explaining away her own apparent indifference; "he is going on as well as we can possibly expect. And I suppose you would be with him if he were dangerously ill?"

"I am not very sure of that," said Flossy rather drily; but she would say no more about it.

It was after breakfast one morning that Enid insisted upon being satisfied by Mr. Vane.

She and the General had, as usual, breakfasted together, and a letter had just been received from the Doctor in attendance on Hubert, over which the General coughed, fidgeted, sighed, and was evidently so much disturbed that Enid's attention was at once roused.

For the earlier part of the meal she had been sitting with her hands clasped before her, not attempting to touch the food upon her plate.

She had no appetite at all; she had passed a bad night, and was little inclined to talk.

But the General's movements and gestures excited her curiosity.

"Have you had any bad news, uncle Richard?"

"No, no, my dear! He's going on very well indeed."

"You mean Hubert?"

"Yes—yes, of course! Whom else should I mean? You wouldn't be alarmed about him at all; he will soon about again in a short time."

There was a tone of mingled vexation and perplexity in the old General's voice.

"Is he conscious now?" Enid asked eagerly.

"Well, no—not exactly—light-headed a little, I suppose. At least——"

"Who has written, uncle Richard? Can I see the letter?"

"No, no, no! Not for you to read, my dear! It's from the Doctor—nothing for you to see."

Enid was silent then for a few minutes; then she spoke with sudden determination.

"Uncle Richard, you are treating me like a child! There is something that you are hiding from me which I ought to know—I am sure of it! Will you not tell me what it is?"

"You are quite mistaken, my dear! There is nothing to tell—nothing that is, in the least particular—nothing that you need trouble about at all."

"There is something! Oh, uncle Richard"—and she rose from her seat and knelt down beside him, putting one arm around his neck and fixing her wistful eyes upon his weather-beaten countenance—"you do not know how much anxiety you cause me by being silent when I am sure that there is something in your mind which concerns me, and which I am not to know! Even if it is a great misfortune—a great sorrow—I would rather know than imagine all sorts of dreadful things, as I do now. Whatever it is please tell me. It is cruel to keep me in ignorance!"

The General now looked puzzled and troubled.

"You had better ask Flossy, dear," he said pulling the ends of his long white moustache and looking away from the pleading face before him. "If there is anything to tell, she could tell it better than I."

"I don't think so, uncle dear," said Enid softly.

Her eyes filled with tears.

"I would rather hear evil tidings from your lips than from those of any other person, because—because I know you love me and would not grieve me willingly. Is Hubert worse than I know? Is he—is he dead?"

"Bless my soul, no!" cried the General. "Why, what put that idea into your mind, child? No, no—he is going on as well as possible—upon my word he is!"

"What is the matter then, dear uncle Richard?"

"It's his nurse," said the General desperately.

"His nurse?"

Enid's eyes grew very large with amazement.

"She isn't a proper, respectable, trained nurse at all. She is just an amateur—a young woman who has no business to be there at all—not much older than yourself, Enid, my dear. That is the reason that Flossy would not stay. We found this young person nursing him, and so we came away. Flossy was very much shocked—very much annoyed about it, I can tell you. I wrote to ask if she was still there, and the Doctor says she is."

Enid's white cheeks had turned crimson, but more with surprise than with anger. The General crossed one leg over the other, and carefully averted his eyes as he went on:

"I don't mean to say anything against her. Flossy says—but you and I have nothing to do with that—she's not a very nice girl; that is all. These professional singers and actresses seldom are. You don't know anything about such people, my little girl, and it is all the better for you. But Hubert should not have friends among people of that kind. I am very much disappointed in Hubert—very much disappointed indeed!"

"This girl is a friend of Hubert's then?"

"I suppose so. Well—yes, of course."

"Who is she? What is her name?"

"She is a singer, my dear," said the General, putting his arm affectionately round the girl's shoulders, "and she is an uncommonly pretty girl—I don't deny that. Oh, of course there is nothing for you to be anxious about! Hubert befriended her, I believe; and she was grateful, and wanted to repay him—and—and all that, you know."

The General was rather proud of having given this turn to the story.

"But I think that was very kind and good of her," said Enid, with kindling eyes. "Why are you so distressed about it, Uncle Richard? I should like to have done the same for poor Hubert too. What is the girl's name?"

"They call her," said the General, looking very much abashed—"they call her Cynthia West. But that isn't her real name."

"Cynthia West!" said Enid, in a low tone.

She was recalling the day when she had questioned Hubert about Cynthia West. He had said that he knew her—a little. And this girl, whom he knew "a little," had gone to nurse him in his hour of need! Well, was there anything particularly wrong in that?

The General, having once begun the story, could not keep it to himself.

"It is a most extraordinary thing," he said, "how Hubert came to know her at all. I should have thought that he would steer clear of her—as clear as of poison—when he was engaged to you and all."

"Oh, he would not think of me at all!" said Enid quietly. "Why should he have avoided Cynthia West?"

"Why?" said the General, bringing his fist down on the table with a bang that made the dishes rattle and caused Enid to give a nervous start. "Why, because she is not Cynthia West at all! She is the daughter of that ruffian—that murderer—to whom your desolate orphaned condition is due, my darling! She is Westwood's child, the man who killed your dear father and who ought to have been hanged for it long ago!"

Enid's hand slipped from her uncle's neck. She knelt on, looking up at him with dazed incredulous eyes and quivering white lips. The communication had given a great shock to her trust in Hubert.

"Perhaps—perhaps," she said at last, "Hubert did not know."

"Oh but he did—he did!" said her uncle, whose memory for dates and details was generally at fault. "If not at once, he knew before very long; and he ought never to have spoken to her again when once he knew. As for all that stuff about his not being quiet unless she was in the room—about her being the only person who could manage him when he was delirious, you know—why, that was stuff and nonsense! They ought to have got a strait-waistcoat and strapped him down to the bed; that would surely have kept him as quiet as any Miss Cynthia West!"

The General said the name with infinite scorn.

"Is that what they said—that he was quiet when she was there?" Enid inquired.

"So they said—so they said! I don't see the sense of it myself," replied the General, feeling that he had perhaps said a little too much.

"Then did he send for her?"

"No, my dear; he was unconscious when she came. I believe that his man Jenkins was at the bottom of it all. He went and told her that poor Hubert was ill."

"But I don't quite understand. If Hubert did not send for her, what right had she to come?"

"You may well ask that. What right indeed! An abominable thing, I call it, for Westwood's daughter to go and nurse one of our family! Don't grieve about it, my darling! If Hubert was led astray by her wiles for a little time, you may be sure that he will be ashamed of himself before very long. He has a good heart, and will not let you go; he loves you too sincerely for that, I am quite sure. So you must not fret."

"I don't; I shall not grieve—in that way, uncle," said Enid gravely, but with perfect calm. "You mean that Hubert cares for her, and that she loves him too?"

"I don't know what she does," said the General, with a rather ominous growl. "I only know that there was some entanglement—understanding—between them—a flirtation, I dare say—young men are not always so careful as they ought to be—and perhaps the girl has taken it seriously."

"Poor girl," said Enid softly, "I am very sorry for her!"

"Sorry? Sorry for Westwood's daughter? Enid, you forget what is due to yourself and to your father! Do not speak of her! Forget her; and rest assured that when Hubert is better he will dismiss her with thanks—if thanks are necessary—and that we shall soon see him here at Beechfield again. And, my dear, when he is better, I will put no further obstacle in your way, if you still desire it—the engagement to go on."

"You forget, uncle Richard," said Enid very quietly, "that there was no real engagement."

She had always maintained to herself before that there was one. He looked at her with wonder.

"But, my dear, there was a sort of an understanding, you know; and Flossy always said that you were so fond of each other."

"Flossy did not know," Enid answered coldly. Then she withdrew herself from the General's encircling arm and rose to her feet. "You have not told me yet, uncle," she went on, "what news you had from the Doctor this morning."

"Oh, nothing fresh!" said the General, in rather a guilty tone; and then, as she pressed him, he explained further. "You see, my dear child, we thought that this Miss West ought to go away, because none of us can go to see Hubert while she is there; if for no other reason, because she is that man's daughter; and I wrote to the Doctor to inquire whether Hubert could not do without her now; and he says, No; that there would be danger of a relapse if she should go."

"Then of course you will say that she must be asked to stay until Hubert is better, uncle."

"Do you think so, my dear?"

"Certainly."

"But it is naturally very painful to you, and to all of us, to think that Hubert's recovery is dependent on that girl. I call it positively degrading!" cried the General, crumpling up his papers and rising from his seat in a sudden fury.

"It is painful—yes," said Enid, with a heavy sigh; "but I suppose that it cannot be helped;" and she turned away, so that he might not see the quivering of her lip or the tear that rolled down her pale cheeks as she said the words.

She went out into the conservatory and sat down amongst the flowers.

She had been too proud to show the General how much she was hurt; but, as a matter of fact, she was very deeply wounded by what she heard.

Her affections were not bruised—she had never cared for Hubert so little in her life; but her pride had received a tremendous blow.

Even if he had only "flirted" with Cynthia West, as the General had suggested, the flirtation was an insult to the girl whom he had asked in marriage.

Indeed it seemed worse to Enid than a grande passion would have seemed; for her readings in poetry and fiction had taught her that a genuine and passionate love sometimes caused people to forget the claims of duty and the bonds of a previous affection.

But the General had not seemed to think that anything of this kind existed: although the fact that Hubert's delirium could not be quieted, except in Cynthia's presence showed, even to Enid's innocent eyes, that some strong sympathy, some great mutual attraction, united them.

If it were so, Enid asked herself, could she blame him? What had she herself done?

Had she not given her heart away to Maurice Evandale, although her word was plighted to Hubert Lepel?

But then, she said to herself, she had never professed any great affection for Hubert; she had not taken the initiative in any way.

He need not have asked her to marry him; he might have left her perfectly free.

She felt indignantly that she had been trifled with; that he had asked her to be his wife without caring to make her so, and that he might perhaps have trifled in the same manner with Cynthia West.

If that were the case, Enid Vane said to herself that she could never forgive him.

He had profaned love itself, the holiest of earth's mysteries, and she resented the action, although she might gain by it her own freedom and happiness.

It was even possible that this gain might be denied her.

Suppose, when he was better, that he came back and claimed her promise, repudiated Cynthia's attempt to earn his gratitude, and explained his conduct in such a manner that no fair-minded person could refuse him credence?

What then could she do?

Enid felt that she might not have the strength to fight against him unless Maurice were at her side; and Maurice had, unfortunately for her, been suddenly summoned to the North of England to attend his father's death-bed.

He had left Beechfield with many fears for Enid's welfare; but he was of course obliged to go, and had had no opportunity of declaring himself to the General as a suitor for Enid's hand before his departure.

For the moment, therefore, Enid was quite alone; and, seeing the net in which she was caught—a net of fraud and trickery and lies—her heart failed her, and she felt herself helpless indeed.

She was in far more danger than she guessed; for Mrs. Vane looked upon her as a deadly enemy, and was resolved that she should never have the chance of confiding what she knew to another person.

From what Hubert had said, the girl had made up her mind to tell him all she knew when once she was his wife.

To tell Hubert was what Flossy was resolved that Enid should never do.

She should never marry Hubert or any other man; sooner than betray Flossy's secrets, Enid Vane should die.

The white still woman with the brown eyes and yellow hair was ready to face the chances of detection; ready to take life, if necessary, rather than see her plans defeated and herself disgraced.

With Enid out of the way, she might not be safe; but she would be safer than she was now.

She took note however of the warning that Parker had given her.

She had been going too fast; she must be more careful for the future.

She must proceed by such slow degrees that Mr. Ingledew himself should be deceived.

And she must change her plans also; for she found that Enid no longer touched the cooling drinks that were placed beside her every night—the girl said that she did not care for them and sent them away untouched.

But surely there were plenty of other ways!

Mr. Evandale had said a few guarded words to Mr. Ingledew about his treatment of Miss Vane, and his remarks had caused the surgeon to send a simple tonic mixture instead of the soothing draughts which had formerly excited some surprise and even some indignation in the Rector's mind.

He did not much believe in soothing draughts, as he soon elicited from Mr. Ingledew that they had been put up in conformity with Mrs. Vane's views in the case rather than according to what Mr. Ingledew himself thought necessary; and a word from the Rector, whose medical knowledge was really considerable, caused Mr. Ingledew to change his opinions very speedily.

At the same time, tonics, like other things, could be doctored; and, as Mr. Evandale was out of the way, Enid's welfare lay, for the time being, at Flossy's mercy.

She began to suffer in the old way—from dizziness and nausea and pains for which she could not account, with an utterly inexplicable weakness and languor, different from all her former symptoms.

Perhaps Mrs. Vane had altered her treatment.

At any rate, it was certain that some mysterious factor was at work stealing the girl's energy away from her, diminishing her vitality, bringing her, in short, to the very gates of death.

And so insidiously did the work proceed that even Parker, who had had suspicions of her mistress, scarcely noted the advance of Enid's malady.

There were no more fainting fits—nothing definitely alarming; but day by day the girl grew weaker; and no one noticed or guessed the reason why.

Enid's nights were restless; but she had not been disturbed since Flossy's return from London by the white figure which she had seen at her bedside.

She told herself that Maurice was right—that her nerves had played her false, and that the appearances had been a mere phantasm of her imagination.

She quite lost her fear of seeing it again; and, although she had held no further conversation with the Rector after Mrs. Vane's arrival in the house, she was reassured and strengthened by the remembrance of his words.

When she awoke in the night-time now, she knew no fear.

And yet—it was about three weeks after the beginning of Hubert Lepel's illness—her heart gave a wild leap when she opened her eyes one night and saw in her room, by the faint light of a glimmering taper, the ghostly figure of a woman clothed from head to foot in white.

She stood, not by the bedside, but by the mantelpiece, with something—was it a medicine-phial?—in her hand.

What the visitant was doing Enid could not exactly see; but she started up; and at the movement the white woman turned and showed her face.

Enid uttered an exclamation, a sort of gasp of terror, for her worst fears were realised.

The phantom which she had dreaded had come to her again in spite of Maurice's promises of aid.

He had forgotten to pray for her; perhaps the childish notion crossed her mind that perhaps because of his forgetfulness the ghost was there.

But was it a ghost, a phantom of the senses, and not a living woman after all?

For the face which met the girl's eyes was not one that she could really mistake. It was the face of Florence Vane.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

"SQUINT" AND SPECTACLES.—A recent writer on ophthalmic surgery calls attention to the fact that many cases of "squint" in children, which, if left to themselves, become so pronounced that only a surgical operation can be of service to them, would be easily cured by the use of proper spectacles if seen by a competent specialist in the earlier stages of the affection.

The present generation, he says, has witnessed many improvements in the operation for squint. The objects to be aimed at by operations have become well understood.

But it is stated that board schools and other educational establishments are still busily engaged in manufacturing fresh cases, though, thanks to improved spectacles, there are now fewer squints requiring operation than formerly.

Age is hardly a bar to the wearing of spectacles, quite young children soon becoming accustomed to their use. It is possible that enthusiastic specialists may sometimes carry their principles too far.

The sight of so many boys and girls in streets and schools and offices with "spectacles on nose" is not encouraging.

Still, if many of the youthful patients are merely undergoing a temporary treatment for squint, there is less reason for regret.

Undoubtedly it is better for a child to wear spectacles for a few years, and thus to be cured, than to have to run the risk of tendon section in later life.

OF NAMES.—"Call no man happy till he is dead," says the maker of apothegms. "Name no son after a living man," is a good maxim to supplement the old saying with. Your feeling toward a man no longer living is less apt to change for one thing: certainly he himself can do nothing to alter it, and till a man is dead, or at least is arrived at an age after which no man's character changes, it is a leap in the dark to tack his name on to a helpless infant. Conversely, it is a pleasure not unmixed with pain to hear your name coupled with that of the degenerate son of even your dearest friend.

IT IS NOT ALL.

BY L. M. S.

It is not all of life to live,
For living may be dying,
A daily death of grief and woe,
Of tears, and sobs, and sighing!

The moments pass like sands of time
Within an hour-glass flowing;
But what they bring of joy or grief
Depends on what we're sowing.

If noble deeds and kindly words
From our warm hearts are flowing,
Then life seems full of songs of birds,
Thro' summer sunshine glowing.

A MAN'S FRIEND.

BY B. DEMPSTER.

CHAPTER IV

THREE weeks went by, filled with the usual routine of the season's gaities and Parliamentary business. Lethbridge combined both, with the marvellous capacity for enjoying himself, and working hard, which his splendid strength, mental and physical, gave him.

But men began to say that he was knocking himself up. His face was looking thin and haggard. He was not himself in the House, and in society he seemed to be growing absent-minded.

His friends remonstrated, and the Duke of Castleton meeting him one night at a large reception, advised him strongly, as if he felt a personal interest in the matter, to take a long rest when Parliament closed.

His daughter also, that same evening, took him to task.

The Lady Winifred Dacre was looking even lovelier than usual, and with the fires of love, despair, fear, raging in his heart, Lethbridge had lingered as near to her as he could.

He followed her from this reception to a ball, at which she had promised to give him two dances, and it was only to have these that he went. It was at the ball that she spoke.

"What is the matter with you, Mr. Lethbridge?" she asked, with a pout. "You have scarcely spoken a dozen words to me all through these two waltzes. Are you ill?"

"Would you care very much if I were?" he asked, eagerly.

"I should care," she said with a laugh, but paling a little. "You must not get ill. What would our side do without you?"

"I'm not thinking of that!" with bitter impatience, for her loveliness, and the thought of how soon it would pass out of his reach, maddened him. "Do not coquette with me. Would you be sorry, if I broke down and failed?"

"I should be very sorry," she said, keeping her eyes on the feather-fan with which she was toying. "Because if you failed to become famous, you and I would never be allowed—able to meet again."

He understood her perfectly. If he succeeded he might be allowed to win her—— She loved him already, he saw that.

But if he failed to fulfil the promises formed for him, she was lost to him for ever; and then as if it were not enough to be banished from her presence, there was the public dishonor the days were so rapidly bringing him.

This would kill her love. He would not even have that remembrance to take into the exile of death.

For he had made up his mind that he would not face the disgrace of the exposure.

He would die first. And only those papers stood between him and life!

"I will not fail," he exclaimed, with fierce passion. "I will sell my soul rather to win you."

Then, as he saw how he had frightened her, he added gently, with a strange smile, "men have to do hard battles sometimes, for the women they love. Luckily, the women sit too far off to hear the blows."

Lethbridge paced out the rest of that night in his own room; and with the dawn he had come to a decision.

He was engaged that morning to a Parliamentary breakfast, and, afterwards, until luncheon, was occupied with some of his constituents.

As soon as he was free, he drove to Jenkin's chambers. But when he arrived there, a clerk told him that he had not been there all day, and was not expected.

Unless he were at his house on the river, none of the clerks could say where Mr. Lethbridge could find him.

Cursing the strangeness of his ill-luck—for he had never known Jenkins to be absent before, without at least leaving word where, in case of great emergency, he could be found—Lethbridge left the office.

Possessed now with an overmastering desire to carry that decision of the morning into effect, he took the train for the house on the river which Jenkins had rented for the summer, on the chance of finding him there.

He had to drive some little distance from Taplow station after he reached there, and thus it was growing rather late in the afternoon, when the carriage stopped at the gate leading to the house.

Telling the driver to wait there for him, as he would only be delayed a few moments, he left the carriage at the gate, and walked up the path to the house.

The front door stood open as he reached it. Jenkins's housekeeper, a pleasant-looking elderly woman, came out of a room near.

Yes, her master was there, she said in answer to an inquiry of Lethbridge's. He was in the garden; she would tell him.

A passage ran from the front door through the house, to another door opening on the garden, which sloped down to the river.

This farther door, framed in roses, stood wide open too, and, through it, Lethbridge caught a glimpse of sunlit sward.

He did not know what possessed him, unless it were that feverish, desperate desire to hasten the end; but instead of staying in the room to which the housekeeper led him, he followed her down to that farther, rose-framed door.

There was a sound of voices, and of a laugh, which he recognized, and yet did not recognize.

But it took him suddenly back to his far-off schoolboy days.

Jenkins used to laugh like that when, in boyish, unthinking happiness, he and Lethbridge amused themselves together.

When he reached the doorway, he was roused for a moment from his own terrible preoccupation.

The scene he saw was so totally different from anything he expected from Jenkins.

A tea-table was set under a tree on the lawn, and about it were two or three comfortable chairs.

A pale, fragile girl, looking as if she had just risen from a dangerous illness, leant back in one, smiling happily.

Near her was a stout, matronly-looking woman, showing by her bonnet painful attempts at adorning herself for the occasion.

She sat on the edge of her chair, poising her saucerful of tea on the tips of her fingers, while her cup stood on the grass at her feet.

Her red, coarse, but honest face showed her anxiously evident to appear at ease, and her hands looked as if charing were her daily occupation.

At the tea-table was another girl. For she looked but a girl this afternoon.

A long day in the sunny, rose-scented air had browned and tinted her cheeks and lips, and intense enjoyment had given back youth to her eyes. She was pouring out the tea, while Jenkins stood by her side, waiting to carry it to his strange guests.

All the women were poorly, and, with the exception of the elderly one, simply clad. They looked like workwomen, except that the one at the table had something indescribably refined in her face and carriage.

In an unconscious way, Lethbridge took in the whole scene, and then his own intolerable personal excitement obliterated everything.

Jenkins, too absorbed in watching the face uplifted laughing to his, did not notice his housekeeper's approach till she spoke. Then he looked up and saw beyond, in the doorway, Lethbridge.

Every drop of blood left his face, till it became ashen grey. He set down the cup hastily on the table, and made a step or two forward. Then he stopped, and turned back to his guests.

"I must leave you for a little. Mrs. Gale will see that——" Then he turned away as if he had forgotten to finish his sentence, and went forward to join Lethbridge.

Neither of the men spoke a word in greeting, and Jenkins, leading the way into a small room near, closed and locked the door, then turned and faced Lethbridge.

"You have come——"

"Yes." Lethbridge made a hasty gesture to prevent Jenkins saying aloud what he had come for. "I have decided. I could face ruin, but not dishonor. And there is no other way. We must not lose any time, either. The shareholders are—— Jenkins, you know what must be done to save me!"

Jenkins nodded.

"And I say, Jenkins," in feverish eagerness, with a strange, hoarse laugh, "you shan't lose by it. We have stuck together ever since that——"

"Compact we made after murdering——"

"Curse you, Jenkins!" with a shuddering look about him. "What the deuce do you mean by speaking like that?"

"I don't know. It was the thought of destroying those papers, perhaps. The money was his, and——"

He stopped. He was going to say, the woman who should have inherited, and to whom they were about to do this irreparable wrong, was there—close—in his garden. But somehow, he could not speak of her to—this man.

"Curse you!" said Lethbridge, fiercely, again. "Why do you call it such an ugly name? We did not know he was there. But there, I can't stay any longer; I'll leave it to you to do when you like—when it is safest. I can trust you; you've never failed me yet."

Then he hurried off, to take up once more the busy, ambitious, honored life, which had been his since his schooldays till now, leaving Jenkins once more, too, to the underground work, which he had done from the old schooldays till now.

It was Jenkins who had helped and saved him, over and over again, from the results of his wild extravagances, his fastidious tastes, his ambitious aims, to which his own modest patrimony had helped so little.

By trickery, corruption, bribery Jenkins had worked in Lethbridge's cause, while Lethbridge sailed fair before the wind of public approval, Jenkins being perfectly willing to run the risk of infamy for the chance of wealth; and Lethbridge had always dealt fairly by him, paying him well for his work, as he had done when Jenkins fagged for him at school.

Lethbridge would profit enormously by the destruction of these papers, of whose existence no one knew save they two, for the person from whose hands, by a strange accident, they had passed into Jenkins's keeping, was dead; and Jenkins himself would benefit largely. It would be sufficient to set him up above the necessity of business.

This was a great consideration, for Jenkins's mode of practice was beginning to excite suspicion among his brothers of the robe; and one or two had begun to look rather coldly on him.

He was quite young yet; little over thirty. It would be a serious thing to lose his business so early in life. One or two sharp actions of his would, if known, be sufficient to get him struck off the rolls.

It would be a wise thing to feather his nest now, so that, in case of emergency, he could retire to it.

He stood motionless for some moments in the creeper-shadowed parlor, from which all the sunlight had withdrawn. Then he went out again to his guests.

He was glad to get out into the hot sunshine again, for he seemed to have grown cold in the shadows of the room, from which the westering sun was cut off.

They had apparently been very happy in his absence. He had a strong suspicion that two at least had enjoyed themselves much more when freed from the restraint of his presence.

For Mrs. Jones was leaning back, talking volubly, interspersing her words with loud laughs, which ceased suddenly with a swift upright movement back to the edge of her chair, at his reappearance; while Maria, who had relapsed into the more convenient, if less elegant fashion, of drinking hot tea from a saucer, hastily poured it back into her cup, and tried to look as if she had still been taking it after the fashion of Mr. Jenkins and Phemie Day herself.

But the latter looked unfeignedly pleased to see him back. Her quick eyes, too, had discovered something that the others had not noticed.

She had seen the blanching of his face, and had feared that the messenger in the doorway had brought bad news.

She looked up at him now, but though still a little pale, he gave no other signs of trouble, and, as he said nothing, she did not like to ask.

But her unspoken sympathy expressed itself in her voice and eyes; for he had been so good to them that she could not bear to see him in trouble.

Maria had left the hospital two days previously, and Jenkins had suggested that a day in the country would do her good, and persuaded Phemie Day to give up her work for a few brief hours and bring her down to his house on the river.

To make it pleasanter for them, he had asked them to invite the woman who shared the other garret on that top landing, and who—honest and respectable—had been kind in many ways to them.

The three lived up there, keeping themselves aloof from the rest of the inhabitants of the house—not always too respectable.

They had enjoyed their day very much, and in different ways expressed their thanks, when the fly, ordered by Jenkins for them, arrived to take them back to the station.

Maria thanked him shyly, though the pretty effect of her blushing face was rather spoiled by a nervous giggle.

Phemie let her hand rest in his—for he seemed to have forgotten that he was holding it—and only said "Thank you," but her eyes shone like two stars, and her lips were as soft as he had dreamed that they might be that afternoon, three weeks before in her garret.

Mrs. Jones dropped him a courtesy, and when he, with an effort at equality which did him credit, seeing how totally unaccustomed he was to ladies of her position and occupation, held out his hand, she touched it for a moment with her own coarse, hard palm, and then dropped it as if it had burned her. But she made a speech.

As Jenkins politely assisted her into the fly after the others, she glanced with what she meant to be an arch and meaning look at Phemie.

"Lor, sir, you've been most kind; quite the gentleman. We'll never forget that beautiful chicken, and puddens, an' things. But me and Maria knows who we've got to thank for it. You wouldn't a done it to sich as we, if it hadn't a bin for Phemie. Any one can see with 'arf an eye——"

At a word from Jenkins, the driver touched up his horse, and the end of Mrs. Jones's speech was scattered in the air, as she was jerked back in her seat. He did not know why he had given the sign. Perhaps for Phemie's sake.

For the last he saw of her, was with the crimson of outraged delicacy staining brow and throat, while her beautiful, steady eyes had fallen, in shocked and troubled shame, to his roses, which she held in her hands.

CHAPTER V.

BUT this last consciousness of Phemie was lost in a sudden rush of overwhelming emotions let loose by Mrs. Jones's coarse, simple jest. Jenkins walked back through the house, and out again to the river edge, where he stood staring down at the water as it eddied and rippled between the rushes and reeds, and caught, out in the deeper stream, strange red reflections like blood, from the setting sun.

He was not thinking. His brain was too stunned by the shock of that wild tumult of feeling.

But, slowly, one distinct thought formed itself out of the chaos. He loved Phemie Day.

It was incredible, preposterous, mad; but it was true. He loved the woman to whom he was about to do that horrible wrong. And then another thought was struck out clear.

She cared for him. Her flushing face; the glad welcome of her greetings; the tender sympathy of her eyes that afternoon; the lingering touch of her hand—all told him.

And, as this thought sent through his whole being a thrill of the most exquisite delight, a fierce, passionate revolt against Lethbridge stirred his soul.

Why should he think of Lethbridge's necessity? Why should not he, Jenkins, marry Phemie Day himself?

Lethbridge had despised her; called her old and faded; jeered at her being a workwoman. He had refused to save himself this way. Let him fall, then! The bond that held the two together was no longer that of friendship.

Jenkins, looking back, with that hot rebellion and defiance in his heart, could not remember the time when it did exist. The more he searched, the farther back his thoughts carried him, until he was not certain that affection did not die on the night that they compassed the death of that old man.

They had stuck together since; but it had been a bond of mutual interests, of old personal influences and associations. A bond cemented on Lethbridge's side by fairness of dealing—for Lethbridge had always been fair and generous to Jenkins, from the school days when he had paid him handsomely for doing work he would not have done himself.

Jenkins acknowledged this, though, of late years, the two had outwardly drifted rather far apart; for it was not good for Lethbridge, in his position before the eyes of the world, to seem to have dealings with a man generally known to be as unscrupulous as Jenkins.

But Lethbridge had never tried to shuffle out of his obligations.

And Jenkins, growing cooler, and being able to acknowledge this, determined that if he married Phemie, he would deal fairly too.

There would be enough in that accumulated fortune to save Lethbridge, and keep himself and Phemie in affluence all their life.

Of course, there would be a breach between them, never to be healed. They would, perhaps, never speak to each other again. But Jenkins was not sorry.

In a vague kind of way, as he thought of Phemie's pure, true eyes looking on to his own life, he began to see that it would be better for him if there were no Lethbridge and only Phemie.

He fell asleep that night and dreamt of her. Beautiful dreams, almost like a foretaste of Paradise.

She was always with him; her voice sounded in his ears; he held her in his arms. But it was curious that the air seemed heavy with some powerful fragrance, which he recognized and yet could not find a name for.

And once, as her lips touched his, that fragrance was so strong, that it oppressed and almost suffocated him, like some subtle, deadly perfume, and in his struggle for breath, he awoke.

But the dream had been so vivid, that its influence still lingered, and the room seemed still faint with that strange, sweet scent.

He knew it now. It was the scent of the poplars by the wicket-gate in the old school grounds.

The next morning he went to Bolton's Rents. He timed his visit about twelve, which was their dinner hour. He could not speak before Maria; but he would persuade Phemie, during that brief respite from toil, to come out and take a walk with him.

That morning's work should be her very last of dreary, drudging slavery. This morning, though the sun was still pouring down hotly on the close alley and court, and the stained, defaced houses, he saw none of the disfigurements. He did not even notice the everlasting clamor of the quarelling, playing, crying children.

On the contrary, he saw all sorts of other things: a pot of scarlet bloom at one of the windows; a girl feeding her canary at another; while he half stopped to look at a chubby little urchin who smiled up at him with the face of a Grouse.

But he hurried on again, all his calmness and coolness forsaking him now, as he neared her house.

He mounted the stairs, grown so familiar to him; he reached the landing, with its wonderful adornments.

Mrs. Jones, as usual, was out at her daily work, and her door was closed. But a sudden mist dimmed his sight, and for a moment he could not see that other one. When the mist cleared, and with it a curious faintness of hearing, he saw that her door was ajar, and through it came sounds of a man speaking.

"Do you think that after the years I have loved you and waited to win you, that I will let you send me away, Phemie? I will not go."

"But you must!" It was Phemie who spoke, in a sweet voice, a little hoarse and strained. "Oh, Lawrence, don't torture me so! For it is torture. Do you think that if I did not love you I would send you away? I will not stand between you and this good fortune. Your uncle is sorry for the past, and sends for you, and you shall go. Do you think he would ever forgive you, if you said to him that you had taken a working woman for your wife?"

"Phemie! As if I would give you up for a hundred fortunes!"

"Ah! But you will, for I will never marry you now. I shall go away somewhere and hide myself, and pray always that you may be happy in the new life that has come to you. Oh! Lawrence!" And now she broke, for a moment, into crying,

and the listener knew that she was crying on that man's breast. "It is hard! And I am not so strong as I thought I was! Some one asked me the other day if I would like to be rich! And I thought of you and of our long love! And now if I were rich I would not send you away, for you need not accept your uncle's offer. But I am poor, and a working woman, and I will never marry you! Never! But if Heaven lets us meet in eternity, and you have not forgotten me, you will find my love waiting there."

Neither here, nor in eternity. Jenkins had never thought of eternity and its issues. In his eager getting of gold, he had not had time.

Now he was suddenly perfectly conscious of eternity, and the possibility of earthly loves living on into it, and through it. And this woman's love would not be his now, or for ever.

He went downstairs, out into the court and through the narrow alley, and into the crowded thoroughfare beyond.

There he lost himself in the great tide of humanity, ebbing and flowing ceaselessly through night and day.

Men looked at his ghostly, white face and wondered if he were ill, or were haunted by a crime. But he walked past them with always the same quiet, steady steps, and they let him go unaccosted. It was no business of theirs.

Under the burning sun, through the noise and traffic, unheeding all, he went. Of how far he went or where he went, he had no consciousness, though he must have turned back from somewhere at last, as he found himself in the evening outside his own office door.

It was Saturday, and all the clerks had long gone home, for he was a considerate and even kind employee, and gave them the holidays he did not take himself.

He let himself in with his key, and, locking himself in his own private room, remained shut up there for some hours. It was six when he entered it. He came out as a neighboring clock struck half-past nine.

He was no longer of the same sallow pallor; his eyes were quiet and keen once more. But his face had aged as if the hours since twelve had been years.

CHAPTER VI.

HE drove to Lethbridge's chambers, and found him in. He had just returned from a political dinner, and was going out again to meet the Lady Winifred Darcy at a reception she was attending that night.

At Jenkins's request, he went with him into the library—the room where, a short few weeks before, they had discussed the matter of destroying the papers.

Jenkins stood, at the writing-table thinking of it.

He had lifted a sharp, dagger-like paper-knife from the table, and was slowly and thoughtfully twisting it in his supple fingers.

Sometimes in his face, and the movement of his hands, sent a cold chill to Lethbridge's heart.

But it was not physical fear.

"What brings you here to-night, Jenkins?" he asked, with an effort at a natural laugh. "I thought you were generally smoking peacefully among your roses at at this hour."

"Roses! What roses!" he said rather sharply.

Then he remembered there had been roses, only a woman, with sweet, grey eyes, had carried them all away with her—so many, that she had laughingly protested as he recklessly cut down every fragrant bloom of crimson and yellow in his pretty garden.

"Oh yes, the roses," with an odd note in his voice. "But it wasn't about them that I came. I wanted to see you to-night. I feel I have made a mistake. It is too late now to go back. A man at thirty-two can't go back and take up his life on a new tack. Perhaps I wouldn't if I could; perhaps to-morrow I shall not think as I do to-day. But I shall not give myself the chance. Only, while I see the mistake I'd like to tell you. It seems to have gone back a long way. It began before I knew you. But I can't help thinking that knowing you, ought to have made a difference. You were strong, and brave, and free, and happy too. I never was. Of course it is a cowardly way of putting it. And I don't mean to blame you for what I am. I was a liar, a coward, a cheat, then. And I am the same now. I dare say I should always have been the same. It is only that now and then I remember odd sorts of moments—one, almost the clearest, and about the last that was of any account, was that night we fired the house—when even I, coward and liar as I was, seemed to feel as if I'd like to be something else; and they make me feel, somehow, as if I might have been different, if my cheating and lying had been kicked out of me instead. But there, it is no use going on at that; there isn't time."

"What are you driving at, Jenkins?" exclaimed Lethbridge.

He was wondering if Jenkins had gone mad, but felt instinctively that for himself it was something worse than madness that moved his old school-fellow.

"I have come to say that I will not destroy those papers, nor give them up to you!"

"You villain!"

Lethbridge blazed out in a perfect frenzy of rage, terror, dismay, at Jenkins's treachery.

"You fool! stand back!"

Jenkins flung off the hands that had caught at his throat.

The very next second he had pulled out a large revolver and covered Lethbridge.

"I am going to give those papers up to Phemie Day. No—I have not got them on me."

Lethbridge, with a murderous gleam in his eyes, looked as if he meant to dare the revolver.

"I will shoot you dead if you advance a step," Jenkins continued. "You will never be able to touch them. But though you will not have all, you shall have enough to save you. I shall see to that. I came, to-night, to prepare you, and tell you what you must do. I shall take all the blame of detaining the papers. You are to know nothing of their existence. You will come out of this clean, as you have come out of every transaction in which I have had to do. Now, I have said enough to prepare you. You are to stay quiet till the end comes; and then, all you have to do is to know nothing. Whatever happens you are safe from dishonor, though you will not have the fortune."

"Do you think me such a fool as ——"

"You will not follow me one step! If you attempt to, or try to detain me one moment longer now, I shoot you dead first, and blow out my brains afterwards. Then will come the exposure, and men will know you for what you are—a villain and felon."

Still covering him with the revolver, Jenkins retreated to the door.

Lethbridge, filled with hate and fear, with the clammy beads of moisture standing thick on his brow, had to obey.

For once, Jenkins was much stronger than he.

A moment longer he was alone.

A strange Nemesis had come to him. The weaker boy, who had been his tool, whose vices he had contemptuously made use of, when he was a schoolboy himself, had in their manhood, by his help, by his tempting, over and over again, drawn out the weakness and vices of his, the stronger, nature.

Was it not Jenkins himself, who had suggested the burning of those papers, in such tempting colors that Lethbridge had yielded: until now it was the very desire of his soul to get possession of them?

And now, at the last, when all depended on it, Jenkins turned traitor.

And yet he might have known that it would come to this.

So long as he, Lethbridge, had been the highest bidder for his service, they were his; now he had gone over to the enemy.

CHAPTER VII.

JENKINS went straight down to his house near Taplow. No one was waiting up for him, for he was always thoughtful of his dependents.

He was hungry and faint, for he had tasted no food since the early morning.

But, after all, as he thought, it did not matter.

He must have been a little light-headed, for as he opened his study door, the room seemed full of the scent of the poplars.

He closed the door gently, and going over to the table, put out the light that was burning on it.

Then he drew up the blinds and looked out.

There was no moon; but the far-off stars shone down passionless, watchful, on the hushed earth.

He stood for a moment vaguely thinking how quiet it all was.

Then he roused himself with a long-drawn breath like a man striving against the sleep that is stealing over him.

"Good-bye, Phemie," he said, turning away from the stars and the quiet trees, and silent, sleeping earth-life.

* * * * * *

They found him, in the morning, quite dead.

The doctor said he must have been dead an hour or two.

There was no need to inquire into the cause of his death.

The faint, unmistakeable odor of prussic acid was the witness.

The first post that morning brought Phemie Day a letter, dated from the night before.

It was from Jenkins. No one ever saw the letter but herself.

But it moved her terribly.

She went straight down to his office, as one of the directions in his letter ordered, and there she heard the painful news of his death.

The chief clerk had also found a letter awaiting him, when he arrived in the morning, acquainting him with the fact that Miss Day would call, and giving him instructions concerning the papers.

These papers proved her to be the missing heiress of Jonathan Day.

Before the year was over, she was a rich woman, and married to the love of her life.

She dealt most generously by Lethbridge.

In Jenkins's letter to her, he had stated without betraying his sins, that Lethbridge was terribly in need of assistance, and that speedily.

He left the matter in her hands.

He knew what manner of woman she was, and she did not betray his trust in the least.

She and Lethbridge, as connections became, outwardly, fairly good friends.

Inwardly, she could never conquer a prejudice she had against him.

A prejudice at which her husband laughed, he too, sharing the popular opinion that Lethbridge was a "fine fellow."

Lethbridge, also, inherited all Jenkins's property.

The latter having some years before, made his will in his favor.

He did not wish any of his own relations, who had treated him so harshly in his youth, to have it, and he had no one else but Lethbridge to leave it to.

By help of this, and Phemie's splendid gift, Lethbridge tided over the difficulties which had so very nearly taken another life.

[THE END.]

LUMINIOUS PAINT.—Until now the commercial manufacture of luminous paint has been confined to England, where a single factory turns out a small supply at a price of about $3 a pound.

This enormous cost seems to have prevented the use of the paint except as a curiosity, and it is fortunate that a firm in Austria, has found means to produce it, and place it on the market at 50 cents a pound, or about one-sixth of the English price.

Even at 50 cents a pound, a substance composed of roasted oyster shells and sulphur might, we should suppose, be manufactured at a good profit, but at that price it is likely to come into extensive use in the future.

Wherever it can absorb light during the day it will give it forth at night, and it is said that a railway car in England, which has had its ceilings painted with it was so brilliantly illuminated that one could see to read a newspaper in it during the darkest night, without other light.

With all due allowances for enthusiasm of early experimenters, there is no doubt that cars with ceilings so painted would be pleasant to ride in, whether one could really see to ride in them or not; and for making key-holes, stairways, and sign boards luminous the paint would be invaluable. Its application to stairways is a particularly obvious one, and the Austrian manufacturers furnish a kind of wall paper on which the paint can be used to better advantage than on the bare plastering.

The paper, which is of a leathery texture is first treated with lime-water, and then primed with a composition furnished by the same firm.

After this is dry two thin coats of the luminous pain are applied, and the whole may then be varnished.

QUEER JURIES.—Two examples of the mode in which juries sometimes decide may be named. In one case, at the Assizes in a Midland town, in England, a girl was charged with the murder of her illegitimate child.

The evidence clearly pointed to her guilt; but the circumstances were painful, and to the general relief of everybody in the court the jury declared her not guilty.

Asked privately how they came to deliver such a verdict, the foreman stated that he had seen the black cap lying on the judge's bench and the sight was too much for him; he hadn't the heart to bring in a verdict of guilty.

"And the others?"

"Oh, well," said the foreman, "ten of them were neighbors and customers of mine, and I easily persuaded them."

"What about the eleventh man?"

"Well, he was a farmer whom I didn't know; and I said to him, 'Well, Mr. Chumps, what do you think about this case?' 'Oh!' he replied, 'I ain't thought nowt about it at all, sir!'"

Yet the trial lasted for the whole of a day.

The other case is a Welsh one—a trial for murder. The prosecution had broken down on a point of law, and the judge "directed" the jury to find the man not guilty.

But all the same, they delivered a verdict of guilty.

His lordship, in a voice that thundered with wrath, explained that he, and not the jury, was the judge of the law, and asked them what they meant by defying his direction.

"Oh, indeed, my lord," said the foreman, with a bland Celtic smile, "but the man at the turnpike told us he knew Peter Jones did it."

A SWINDLER in Vienna, who had borrowed large sums of money and had collected a great deal of jewelry which was unpaid for, knew he could not get away from the city by train, so he advertised a balloon ascension and a parachute performance. He got the balloon made on credit, also, and, in company with his wife, not only went up, but went off. His capture was as curious as his escape. That evening a pigeon came to Vienna bearing a dispatch from a correspondent to the Carrier Pigeon Club announcing the descent of the balloon, and the man was soon caught.

"What is the matter?" inquired the reporter as he took out his note-book and hurried up to the dilapidated bummer who had just been fired head-first out of a ward caucus.—"You may say, sir," replied the battered vagabond, picking up his hat and placing it on his head with much dignity, "that there is nothing the matter. I have simply gone out of politics. That's all."

About two weeks ago Charles Mignard, a compositor of Hoboken, was stung on his lip near the nose by an insect. He rubbed the spot with his finger when it itched, and his face swelled terribly. He died on Sunday last, and it is thought that the lead from the type which he handled poisoned him.

WHEN a man cannot have what he loves, he must love what he has.

Scientific and Useful.

THE EYES.—To bathe the eyes properly, take a large basin of cold water, bend the head close over it, and with both hands throw the water with some force on the gently-closed lids. This has something of the same effect as a shower-bath, and has a toning-up influence.

TO KEEP BRASS BRIGHT.—To keep highly polished brass free from tarnishing cover it with a thin coat of varnish made of shellac dissolved in alcohol. So long as the varnish remains the brass will continue to remain bright. The article should be warm when the varnish is to be applied.

BRICKS FOR TRIMMING.—A new hydraulic brick is now manufactured in eight different shades of red and brown, which, on cheap houses, is designed to supply the place of brownstone or sandstone for trimmings. The shades of color run from a rather dark-brown to a reddish hue, and at a superficial glance might well be taken for the stones the place of which they supply.

SOFT COAL.—The belief that smoke from soft coal may have beneficial sanitary effects is gaining ground. It is claimed that the sulphur in the coal when burned becomes sulphurous acid gas, a well-known disinfectant. Further, that creosote and its allied products are thrown off with the fumes of bituminous coal, and that an atmosphere charged with carbolic acid must be freer from germs of disease than an apparently purer air.

CUTTING GLASS.—One of the new ways in which electricity is used is to cut glass in factories. The glass is encircled by a fine wire that is connected to a small battery. The wire is then drawn tightly and the current turned on. Naturally, the wire is heated, and the heat extends to the glass under it. When in this state, water is poured on and a clean break effected on the path of the wire. Logically, the thicker the sides of the cylinder are, the cleaner will be the cut.

TRANSMITTING LIGHT BY WIRE.—A Frenchman, M. Courtonne, announces that he will shortly make public a discovery he has made which will enable people to use their eyes in the same way that the telephone adds to the ordinary powers of the ear—that is, as the telephone enables us to hear sounds from a long distance, the telephote will enable us to see far-off objects. He maintains that his invention will permit of the transmission on a wire of luminous vibrations, through any kind of obstacle, for thousands of miles. The user of the telephote, it is assumed, can see whatever is visible from the instrument at the other end of the wire as easily as if he were on the spot.

Farm and Garden.

SHELTER.—Hens roosting in the trees will be subject to roup when east winds or dampness reaches them. The fall is more unfavorable to poultry than the winter. Shelter of some kind should always be provided.

THE LAND.—Every crop grown on the farm takes something from the land, and if land is to be retained in fertility it must be fed with manure or fertilizer in order that it may regain that which is lost through crops.

GRAPES.—In towns and cities people might have grapes with but little trouble if they would plant a vine or two. No matter if the surroundings are paved with brick, the vines may be carried to the second or third story and trained in front of a balcony, where grapes enough for a family might be grown.

LEAKING MILK.—In reply to an inquiry for a remedy for cows leaking milk, an exchange gives this: Blue vitriol (sulphate of copper), two ounces, in six ounces of water, thoroughly mixed and applied to the end of the teat two or three times, or till the difficulty is removed. The efficacy of the solution is doubtless due to its astringency.

THE HORSE.—Never whip a horse when he is frightened or nervous, or try to force it up to the object that has caused the alarm; draw in on the reins, suddenly speak out with assurance that you are not afraid, then turn the animal a little from the unpleasant sight and bid it go. A blow of a whip upon a frightened horse gives it double cause for violent action.

THE DAIRY.—A flagstone floor with cemented joints is best for the dairy. Wooden floors are apt to rot out, and bricks absorb the spilled milk, soon becoming very offensive. If bricks are used, the floor should be kept painted all the time, and even with this extra trouble it is not so good as flagstone and cement. The flagstone underground is always easily kept cool, as a dairy floor should be.

LAMBS.—A "Lamb Club" has been formed by a party of Tennessee sheep men for the purpose of breeding and selling spring lambs to the best advantage. The lambs are sent to the New York market, great pains being taken to secure the best possible specimens as well as to ship them in good condition. By combining and concentrating their business the members of the club are enabled to secure the lowest rates of transportation and to present lambs of uniform grade.

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Of Useless Things.

The customary delay and roundabout way of doing things in official life has long since been aptly christened by the name of "red tape." But it is not only in public office and with public officials that "red tape" exists. It is of many kinds and appears in numberless places.

One variety of the disease consists in words, phrases, functions and ceremonial observances out of which the spirit has fled, or the understanding, or both.

Our ordinary social life is largely built on structures of this material, as cities stand on vast thicknesses of chalk composed of the deserted habitations of countless myriads of tiny creatures long deceased. Our words are often sepulchres, with no life in them.

A certain vicar assured his readers some years ago that the well-known marriage service as uttered by his brides and bridegrooms exhibited curious deterioration. One of the sentences which the latter has to utter was quite commonly rendered thus:

"With my body I thee wash up, and with all my worldly goods I thee and thou."

This was matched, and even exceeded, by the lady's variations of her part, in promising to take her husband "to 'ave and to 'old from this day forth'n'it, for better'er horse, for richer'er power, in sigger'nce else, to love cherries and a bay."

They knew they were being married, and that this marvellous coil of red tape was somehow a necessary part of the function; but the attempt to explain how and why would have smitten them with paralysis.

The distorted sentences, texts and hymns thus repeated by thousands of good and simple souls daily would stagger us if statistics could be obtained.

Child-piety is a beautiful and simple thing, and is often in danger of being throttled by red tape; but generally is lissome and buoyant enough to escape.

In what sweet freedom of all meaning the scallop of a child's soul will dance over a sea of words, neither knowing nor caring for the profundities below. Still it is not children only who are ready to gabble words without meaning in the name of red tape.

Another variety of red-tapeism consists in the conservation of decrees, orders, customs and ceremonies from which reason has perished, as the snails out of the dry snail-shells that roll about chalk downs.

Even the dog is subject to this complaint when he turns round three times before lying down because his ancestors did so to make a bed in the long prairie grass.

"Leave your stick, sir," said a door keeper to a gentleman who was passing into an exhibition.

"But I haven't got a stick," the visitor replied.

"Then you must go and buy one; the orders is as every gentleman is to leave his stick."

The well-known instances of the two Russian sentinels are in point here. One stood at the entrance of a passage and cried, "Keep to the left!" the other mounted guard in the middle of a grass plot.

The origin of the first regulation was traced back, through a generation, to an occasion when the right wall of the passage had been painted; and the second sentinel quite unconsciously commemorated the advent, in a previous century, of an unexpected little snowdrop which charmed the Empress of that day, and was ordered to be guarded.

It is clearly the duty of society to return dead things to dust as soon as possible, and not to bury them in oak coffins, resisting the kindly influences that make for dissolution.

Life, we are told, is the sum of the influences that resist dissolution; there may be therefore some life in red tape, but it is not a wholesome life.

When a creed or custom is dead, call in the burying-beetles, and let them forthwith undermine it and inter it.

It is dreadful that a thing be kept alive by red tape after it is dead, like that wretched man in Poe's tale who was mesmerized while dying, and when at last released fell into the crumbling relics of a death of long ago.

We do not advocate cremation. There are always some devotees whose feelings would be harrowed by the visible smoke and flame; but do not deliberately obstruct dissolution. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes."

And when anything that holds ourselves or the world back is traceable to anything in the nature of red tape in any of its varieties, let it die, or, rather, put it out of the way at once.

WITHOUT perfect confidence marriage happiness cannot be permanent. It is not, as Shakspeare says, "a sweet marriage." There can be no true union where, either through pride or fear, or the consciousness of mistakes or errors, one conceals from, or attempts to deceive the other, or holds back from any motive that which each has a mutual right to know. Want of confidence on the part of the husband, after the novelty of married life and having a home of his own has worn off, is frequently practiced from the foolish fear that by confiding truly in his wife she may exact it as a right; and his pride takes alarm lest, trusting to his other and often far better half, he may risk the loss of some of his boasted independence. The wife is sometimes tempted to concealment, and sometimes to deceit and falsehood, through fear of her husband's anger or dread of his ridicule. The only perfect remedy for all this is perfect confidence, and, above all, avoiding all confidants of either sex.

TAKING up one's cross means simply that you are to go the road which you see to be the straight one, carrying whatever you find is given you to carry as well and stoutly as you can, without making faces or calling people to come and look at you. Above all, you are neither to load nor unload yourself, nor cut your cross to your own liking.

IT is not sufficient to constitute ourselves just men and women that we strictly pay our debts, keep our promises and fulfill our contracts, if at the same time we are stern where we should be kind, hard where we should be tender, cold where we should be sympathetic, for then we pay only half our debts and repudiate the other half.

EACH human life is a crystal, rather than a surface; it has many faces, and each face seems to him who sees it a complete life; and yet all the faces form but a part of the one life whose depths are concealed from sight.

SINCERITY is speaking as we think, believing as we pretend, acting as we profess, performing as we promise, and being as we appear to be.

IT is not intellectual work that injures the brain, but emotional excitement. Most men can stand the severest thought and study of which their brains are capable, and be none the worse for it, for neither thought nor study interferes with the recuperative influence of sleep. It is ambition, anxiety and disappointment, the hopes and fears, the loves and hates of our lives that wear out our nervous system and endanger the balance of the brain.

THERE is seldom a line of glory written upon the earth's surface but a line of suffering runs parallel with it; and they that read the lustrous syllables of the one, and stop not to decipher the spotted and worn inscription of the other, get the lesser half of the lesson earth has to give.

WE do not please Heaven more by eating bitter aloes than by eating honey. A cloudy, foggy, rainy day is not more heavenly than a day of sunshine. A funeral march is not so much like the music of angels as the song of birds on a May morning.

WORDS are little things, but they strike hard. We wield them so easily that we are apt to forget their hidden power. Fitly spoken, they fall like the sunshine, the dew and drizzling rain; but when unfitly, like the frost, the hail and the tempest.

THERE is, of course, much rough work to be done in the world for which grace and courtesy might be deemed superfluous; but wherever they can be applied, there is no doubt that they greatly sweeten and beautify life.

SPARE moments are the gold dust of time. Of all the portions of our life, spare moments are the most fruitful in good or evil. They are the gaps through which temptations find the easiest access to the soul.

THE wise man makes equity and justice the basis of all his conduct. The right forms the rule of his behavior, deference and modesty mark his exterior, sincerity and fidelity serve him for accomplishments.

PERVERSENESS may be considered the canker of life that destroys its vigor and checks its improvement, that creeps in with hourly depredations, and taints and vitiates what it cannot consume.

AS benevolence is the most sociable of all virtues, so it is of the largest extent; for there is not any man either so great or so little but he is yet capable of giving and of receiving benefits.

THE hard strata of circumstances through which one's life rill must filter and force its way, may make it purer and clearer, just as all hard strata are the filtering stones of water.

THE common practice of cunning is the sign of a small genius; it almost always happens that those who use it to cover themselves in one place lay themselves open in another.

THE great secret of avoiding disappointment is not to expect too much. Despair follows immoderate hope, as things fall hardest to the ground that have been nearest the sky.

MANY who would not for the world utter a falsehood are yet eternally scheming to produce false impressions on the minds of others respecting facts, characters and opinions.

AN individual can not change the conditions of society in which he is obliged to live, and must either conform to them or be excluded from intercourse with his fellows.

THAT which is good to be done, cannot be done too soon; and if it is neglected to be done early, it will frequently happen that it will not be done at all.

NONE are too wise to be mistaken, but few are so wisely just as to acknowledge and correct their mistakes—especially mistakes of prejudice.

WE should round every day of stirring action with an evening of thought. We are taught nothing by experience unless we muse upon it.

The World's Happenings.

There are over 1,000 amateur photographers in Chicago.

There are 28 739 known thieves over 16 years of age in England.

One in five of the entire population of Great Britain is in the Sunday schools.

A "pink and green party" at Vineland, N. J., turned out to be a watermelon feast.

Hereafter each infantry regiment of the French army will contain four velocipedists.

It is asserted that there are 80 different varieties of tomato, not including the canned.

An old guide in the Adirondacks estimates that there are no less than 50,000 deer and 5,000 bears in those regions.

Out of 28 murders committed in London last year, in only six instances were the perpetrators brought to justice.

A man, woman and two children have just arrived in Elmira, N. Y., from Kansas, having made the long journey on foot.

Chicago has a university that confers any honorary degree, from M. A. to L. L. D., for the reasonable sum of from $10 to $25.

A judge down in Tennessee has instructed his grand jury "to indict all persons who publicly express infidel sentiments."

As iron expands with the heat, the Eiffel tower is said to be five inches taller when the temperature is high than it is in the cool of the day.

A variety show is on the road in which a Japanese "artist" walks barefooted up a sort of ladder composed of axes with the sharp edges uppermost.

A London journal states that shirts of chain armor, which cost about $500, are now worn by more than one distinguished person on the Continent.

Women have often successfully hid valuables in their hair, and a young French lady recently found a 1000f. note in her deceased mother's chignon.

There are now 101 geographical societies in the world. France comes first with 23, Germany next with 22, and Great Britain third with 9 societies.

M. de Freycinet, the French statesman, has issued a commission to inquire into the feasibleness of employing swallows to carry war messages, in lieu of carrier pigeons.

A cow in Connecticut chawed to a pulp her owner's discharge and pension papers. They fell from a pocket of the farmer's coat which was hanging on a stone wall in the field near the cow.

Four tramps were put up at public auction in Missouri, the purchaser of each being entitled to his services for four months. Two of them brought $2 each, one 75 cents, and no bidders for the fourth.

There are 90 political journals in Paris, 65 journals devoted to science, 34 to sport, 22 to the theatres, 20 to the fine arts, 60 to trade, 75 to jurisprudence, 120 to medicine and 30 to fashions. There are, besides all these, 75 illustrated journals.

Connecticut has her share of districts with curious names. A writer says in going to West Rocky Hill from East Berlin one passes over Cowbell Hill into Pumpkintown, sees Peat Swamp, Hang Dog, Vexation, God's Acre and Two Stones, now Griswoldville.

Few persons, if any, now living, will again date a document without using a "9." It now stands on the extreme right—1889. Next year it will take second place—1890, where it will remain ten years. It will then move into third place—1900, and there will rest a century.

When the Austrian Emperor saw the review at Spandau, he learned for the first time that the smokeless powder, which was used with such effect, had been invented by an Austrian apothecary and offered to the Austrian Government, but had been declined.

Grand Rapids, Mich., offered a bounty for the killing of English sparrows, and up to date boys have slaughtered over 20,000 of the pests. In addition the boys have filled a horse with bird shot, punctured the leg of one of their number with the same, and put out the eye of another.

A fire that broke out in the shaft of a coal mine at Birmingham, Ala., imprisoned a miner and 16 mules. The miner was reached about 10 days afterward and was found to be dead. Eighteen days after the fire the mules, which were much further back in the mines, were reached, and all but one of the 16 were alive although too weak to stand.

The fire method of starting a balky horse was tried by a farmer at Beaver Falls. It was successful, and more, too. The wagon was loaded with oats, which were ignited, and the animal, in dashing around, spread the fire to several stacks of oats. These were destroyed, leaving the farmer without even a saleable remnant of his oats crop.

An English scientist has been making experiments to determine the important part which light plays in the development of animal life. A dozen tadpoles were confined in a box from which every ray of light was excluded. The result was that only two of them developed into frogs, and these were short lived. The others increased considerably in size, but never left the tadpole form.

A dog owned in Red Hook, N. Y., by one Flynn, recently chewed up and swallowed a $2 bill. As the canine had no commercial value he was killed and the fragments of the bill, including the piece which bore the number, were recovered. They were forwarded to the Treasury Department at Washington and a new bill was duly returned to Flynn.

A remarkable system of carrying little children as passengers seems to have been in practice hitherto upon the Russian railways. The Russian Ministry of the Interior has just issued an ordinance to all railway officials prohibiting the further "packing of small children in baskets, to the number of eight in a basket, and forwarding them to the foundling houses in the great towns as hand-luggage."

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

BY LOUISE MALCOM STENTON.

Soon our voyage of life will be over,
With its tempests and shipwrecks at sea,
And my soul the query is asking,
Is Heaven's dear harbor for me?

Not in my own strength am I sailing,
At the helm of my bark Jesus stands;
'Mid the billows and breakers He guides me
Safely on toward His own happy lands.

There my loved ones are eagerly waiting,
To greet me with rapturous joy;
No atom of pure love abating,
A love without earthly alloy.

The voyage of life is too stormy,
One can but rejoice at its end,
Where, safe in the arms of the Saviour,
Earth's sorrows again can ne'er rend.

A Simnel Charm.

BY A. Y. R.

"DEBORAH, can you make a Simnel cake?"

The old woman regarded her questioner with surprise.

"Mak' a Simnel, Miss Nina? Ay, I reckon I'd be shamt o' mysen if I couldna; an' a real owd Bury Simnel, too, boiled and baked, an' wi' saffron, an' maybe wi' a charm. But folk nowadays think theirsen a sight too grand fur to need charms."

The two were standing in the kitchen of the Mill Farm, an old-fashioned kitchen with a stone floor, and whitewashed walls ornamented with shining pots and pans. The door was wide open, letting in a flood of sunshine.

Through the doorway one caught a glimpse of the farmyard; the river beyond, with the little foot-bridge; and the mill, a cloud of spray rising from the water-wheel, that splashed and thundered, filling the air with a murmurous drone, above which one heard the chirping and twittering of birds.

Across the river lay broad meadows, starred with celandines, and, yet further, thick woods, the leafless trees standing out darkly against the blue.

"Charms, Deborah?" repeated Nina, looking over the green fields with serious gray eyes, while a sunbeam entangled itself in the brown meshes of her hair, and turned it to gold. "What sort of charms?"

"Love-charms, o' course. Eh, many's th' lass I've known put a charm in th' Simnel cake, if th' lad as hoo'd set her heart on wouldna' speak. I mind puttin' a charm i' a Simnel cake fur to mak' Matt Thompson oppen his mouth. I'd been walkin' out wi' him nigh on three year, an' I thowt it wur about toime to talk o' gettin' wed. So I made a couple o' Simnels, an' put th' charm i' th' smallest, an' set off whoam. I wur' stayin' wi' an uncle then. It wur a Saturday afternoon, an' I met Matt at the first stile. 'I'm takin' mother a Simnel,' I says, 'and i've made another for thee. I'll give thee a bit now.' Wi' that, I broke a bit off. He took and ate it, an' says, 'Lass, tha's a graidly hond at Simnels. This here's a grand un. Let's ha' it fur a weddin' cake; it'll keep three week. We'll get parson to put up th' askin's to-morrow.' Ay, that wur a quick charm, sure enow."

"And what was the charm?"

"Tha takes a bit o' fern-root that has th' black mark in it—tha' mun pull it at th' new moon—an' two white beans an' one black one—tha mun choose 'em at th' full moon—an' grind 'em all to powder, an' stir it into th' cake. When once th' charm is i' the cake, theer's nowt more to do but to moind as tha's th' first woman to give the lad a slice on't. It dunnot matter who gives it to him afterwards—it's th' first woman. Tha sees?"

"I understand."

"Ay, it's a good charm," repeated Deborah, pausing, with uplifted rolling-pin. "I dunnot know a better."

The inner door opened, and a pretty, dark-haired girl put her head into the kitchen.

"Deborah, you wicked old woman! Why didn't you tell me that charm? I might have used it. I've heard every word; it's a lovely charm!"

"Eh, Miss Molly, th' lads coom quick enow wi'out anything o' that sort," and a smile stole over the old woman's face.

"Would you like to make the experiment on anybody, Nina dear?"

Nina Croft blushed. It was a very faint, fleeting, wild-rose blush, but still it was there, and did not escape her friend's amused eyes.

"I could not make the Simnel," she said.

"Oh, yes, you could, under Deborah's superintendence. We will make one each, you and I, and Deborah shall make a third—a big one—for the household, as she always does. Our little Simnels," with a significant nod, "we will dispose of as we think fit. There is plenty of time to gather the charm materials. This week is new moon, and before mid-Lent Sunday there will be a full moon; so——"

"Wheer's th' cranberries fur th' tart?" inquired Deborah, looking up from her pastry.

"The cranberries? I forgot them."

Molly disappeared, and returned with a large brown jar full of the bright red fruit.

"These are the last," she said, setting down the jar. "Nina, will you come out with me? Mother is in the Robin field, looking at the new Alderney Frank has given her. Come and choose it a name."

Mrs. Rushton had been left a widow, with an insufficient income and one daughter—Molly.

Of course, relatives and unthinking friends had solved for her the problem of how to live by glibly observing that there was enough for herself, and Molly must teach.

It is always so easy to assume that every girl has an inborn talent for teaching.

But Molly declared she "could teach nothing, she was positive." She "hated the idea; besides, she knew nothing either. Also, she would not leave her mother."

And as for Mrs. Rushton, no wonder the poor soul shrank from a lonely life in lodgings.

At last, after much thought, mother and daughter decided upon taking the Mill Farm, and becoming "farmeresses," as Molly remarked.

By letting most of the meadow-land they reduced the farm to manageable dimensions.

Their little income paid the rent. They wisely did not attempt to grow cereals, but confined themselves to eggs and poultry, milk and butter, fruit and vegetables; things that found ready sale in the manufacturing town of Yale, four miles away.

Wealthy people in the town, who had known Molly's father, made a point of purchasing direct from the Mill Farm.

So the Rushtons led a busy and happy life in the fresh air and the smiling country; a life infinitely better for both than toil of teaching for the one, and weary solitude for the other.

"Of course," said Molly, to her school-friend Nina, "I cannot afford frocks to go to entertainments, so I never go anywhere. But old friends often come to see us, particularly in summer. We are not at all dull; and there is so much to do, that the days seem to fly."

This was Nina's first visit to the Mill Farm. Her stepmother had joyfully assented to her spending three months with Molly Rushton: for Mrs. Croft intended going abroad for that period, and had no great wish to take her step-daughter with her.

To the town-bred girl everything was new and delightful; and Molly had wonderful news for her when she arrived. Did Nina recollect Frank Hope? He used to come to their house in Yale in the old days. He was a mill-owner.

Surely Nina must remember him; he was such a dear fellow, and so good looking. Well, Nina must be her bridesmaid. They were to be married in the summer.

"And your mother? Will she leave the farm?" inquired Nina.

"Oh, no; she says she has grown fond of it, and it gives her occupation. I shall not be far away from her, for we shall live at Yale. I dare say she will have a cousin of mine to live with her when I am gone; but nothing is settled yet."

Her future being so happily assured, Molly Rushton had no need of the Simnel charm. In truth she thought no more about it.

It lingered, however, in Nina's mind. Charms were mere silly superstition, she told herself.

Nevertheless, when a silver crescent shone in the blue, somebody pulled up a root of the brown, withered bracken in the garden hedge.

The fern grew by the little white gate through which Dr. Octavius Burnley had passed so often lately, in attendance on Mrs. Rushton, who had sprained her foot.

The foot was well now; and Molly and her mother rejoiced. So did Nina in sympathy; yet she missed Dr. Burnley's visits.

He had seemed to linger; and once or twice had found time to stroll round the meadows with the two girls.

He was a young man, and was in partnership with old Dr. Marsland, of Yale. So Molly said, adding that he was "a great friend of Frank's."

The crescent moon waxed, and the March sunshine brought out the blossom of the blackthorn, and strewed yellow celandines so thickly over the home meadow that, in spots near the river, the green was almost hidden by the gold.

Here and there pinky white anemones ventured to open their fragile petals, while the palm-willows spread silvery white catkins, to tell the world that winter was over and Easter near.

The foot-path through the fields led to an old-fashioned stile at the edge of the woods, and near it the first primroses always grew.

One sunny afternoon, in the middle of the month, Nina discovered a great cluster of them, like a patch of brighter sunshine. She was stooping to pluck them, when Dr. Burnley's voice startled her.

"Have I frightened you?" he said. "I am so sorry. I suppose you were so absorbed with your primroses that you did not hear me coming? I take this short cut twice a day now, unless it rains, when I drive round by the road, so don't mistake me for a poacher when you meet me in the woods."

"I don't go in the woods," replied Nina, "only about the meadows, when Molly is busy. I am never tired of admiring this place. It grows prettier every day."

From where they stood the fields stretched green and golden to the shining river; the blackthorn was white in the hedges; the red roof of the farmhouse stood out against the blue of the sky.

"Green, and gold, and white—those are the colors of early spring," said Burnley, looking, however, not around, but at his companion. "If you will come a little way with me, I will find you some more primroses. I saw them yesterday."

They turned down a path to the right, skirting the woods—a path partly overhung by larches, on whose swinging branches birds perched, and sang of the coming summer.

Then the ground dipped, and in a grassy, ferny hollow were hundreds of the beautiful blossoms.

"They 'make a sunshine in the shady place,' like Una's hair, don't they?" said Burnley. "Now you cannot possibly want all of them. Give me a few for myself. Have I not earned them?"

This when Nina was primrose-laden.

She gave him a small bunch, telling him that all the rest were needed to ornament the farm parlor.

"In honor of Simnel Sunday?" he inquired. "Do you know Miss Rushton has invited me to come in after church with Hope, and eat Simnel according to custom? As I shall do that at about twenty or thirty houses during the day, I expect to be very ill on Monday."

He walked back to the stile with her, and then said good-bye.

"I have not time to run in at the farm; pray make my excuses. I must hurry off to the Hall. Old Mr. Fulshaw is ninety-two, and they expect me to cure him. I wish I could; but I'm afraid nothing but the elixir of youth could do that, and I don't possess it."

He disappeared among the trees, and Nina returned to the farm, and astonished Molly with the primroses.

"How lovely! How nice of Dr. Burnley to tell you where to find them! Mother, do you hear?"

"Yes, my dear. Poor Mr. Fulshaw! But really ninety-two is a great age. Deborah heard that they kept Dr. Burnley there till nearly eleven a few nights ago. I hope he does not take that short cut through the woods at night. I'm sure it is not safe with so many poachers about."

"Why, mother, poachers would not harm a doctor."

"Not intentionally, my dear; but they might mistake him for a keeper. Or, there might be shooting going on—a fight, I mean."

"Well, he would not take part in it," said Molly, laughing.

"Of course not; but one never knows whom those shots may hit. I confess I am dreadfully alarmed at poachers."

"Be comforted, mother; they won't 'burgle' the Mill Farm. And as for Dr. Burnley, he is quite safe, I am certain. Don't look so scared, Nina. I assure you if the man-in-the-moon had been a poacher, mother would picture him attacking the back-door with dog and sticks."

The man-in-the-moon! The moon was at the full that night, and all the evening Nina hesitated as to whether she should add the rest of the charm to that half-finished of fern-root that was lying in her dressing-case.

Finally, when the household had retired, she decided that of course she would not be so silly.

Nevertheless, she sat up reading till the tall old clock downstairs droned eleven, and the moon was high above the farmhouse chimneys.

Nina drew aside the curtain and looked out. The night was very clear; the river, the meadows, the dark woods, were all bathed in the white glory of the moonlight.

Half the farmyard was in the light, half in the dark shadows cast by the stables and barns, which were built at right angles with the house.

Just below Nina's window, Turk, the mastiff, slumbered in his kennel beside the kitchen door. The dog knew her; she could pass him easily enough.

Mrs. Rushton and Molly slept at the front of the house; they would not be likely to hear her creep down these queer little back-stairs.

And as for Deborah, certainly the old woman's room was near; but doubtless one would be tired, and would sleep soundly.

For Nina was half ashamed of her wish to try the charm. No one must know. Then she hesitated again; she would not get the beans.

Yet, there was the granary, with its outside flight of wooden steps; just opposite Turk's kennel.

How easy it would be to get a handful of beans out of the big sack inside the door!

Nina made up her mind, put on a warm jacket and little fur cap—for March nights are chilly, however mild the month may be—and stepped like a mouse down the stairs leading to the kitchen.

The back-door was secured by an iron bar, and also by a primitive hook at the top, as well as by an ordinary lock and key. However, she contrived to undo all three fastenings with very slight noise.

Turk came out of his kennel, yawned, and slowly wagged his tail in recognition. Nina patted his head, ran across the moonlit yard, and up the granary steps.

The door was locked; but the key always hung in the kitchen, and she had taken it as she passed through.

In another minute she had a handful of the beans, and was selecting the magic three by the moonlight when a shot, followed by several more, broke the stillness of the night.

Mrs. Rushton's words flashed into the girl's mind. Poachers! Yes, of course; and the gamekeepers had caught them. Surely there was no danger for—anybody else!

It was not probable that he would stay so late at the Hall. Besides, they would not harm him.

Nina stood by the granary door, straining her eyes across the two fields that separated the river from the woods.

From the height of the steps she could see every yard of the way, from the foot-bridge to the stile—a low one with one bar. Over this a man stumbled, then fell in the short grass.

She clasped her hands in horror, and the beans rolled with a faint rattle into the yard. She did not hear them—had forgotten them, in fact.

Who was the man lying yonder? A wounded poacher, or keeper; or—Dr. Burnley? If a poacher, why did not his companions come to his assistance? Perhaps he was a solitary keeper?

She must rouse the house and get help in any case; but for the moment she felt powerless to stir.

Everything seemed so strangely unreal; the white night, the black, fantastic shadows, the soft lapping of the river, that prostrate figure lying in the moonlight. He raised himself, and crawled a few paces, then sank again.

At that distance it was not possible to recognize him; but a terrible conviction came to Nina.

Rushing down the steps, she unchained Turk; and bidding the dog follow her, ran over the little bridge, along the path, and found, as she instinctively knew she should—Octavius Burnley.

* * * * * *

"An' a foine doment it wur," said old Deborah to the miller, one warm morning two months later. "When Miss Nina coom rushin' back an' roos'n us a' coop, eh! yo' might ha' knocked me down wi' a hay-wisp, so to speak. An' me runnin' down to th' mill to wake ye a' coop fur to fetch th' doctor fro' th' field to th' house—I mean say yo' were pretty quick."

"Oh, ay," returned the miller, "I reckon we didna stop to curl our hair. I'm not

down glad them poscuin' chaps wur caught. It's a foine thing to be lettin' fly at keepers, an' hittin' a mon walkin' quietly whoam. They hannot ought to ha' guns at a', but if they mun fire at keepers, let 'em hit 'em, I say, an' not go pepperin' folk as ha' nowt to do wi' th' roompus. It isna fair! Eh, dear, an' it wur owd Fulshaw's doin' in a way. He wur nobbut a poor moitherin' chap a' his loife, an' he couldna even dee wi'out makin' a bother. If he hadna kept Doctor Burnley that late, nowt would ha' happent. However, it's coom a' rest. He mun be gettin' well, as he's goin' whoam to Yale, to-morrow. 'Tis a long toime, though. Th' blackthorn wur white then, an' now th' apple-blossom is a pink ivvery where. But if a man mun be ill, th' Mill Farm isna a bad place, wi' a sweetheart to help i' th' nussing," Deborah nodded.

"It wur that Simnel charm o' mine as saved him; fur if Miss Nina hadna gone fur th' beans, th' doctor would ha' lain theer i' the meadow an' deed. Ay, it war a good charm!"

* * * * * *

That was a year ago. The Mill Farm remains unaltered; but some of its inmates are flown.

Nina Croft has changed her name to Burnley, and lives at Yale, near her friend Molly, now Mrs. Hope, who laughingly maintains the undoubted efficacy of the Simnel charm.

"But we did not make the cakes," says Nina, "only Deborah made one. We forgot."

"Oh, that's nothing," retorts Molly. "Your intentions were to brew the charm."

Then, imitating Deborah, she adds, "Eh, but it wur a good charm!"

The Ruling Power.

BY D. S. Y.

YOU will be very careful to make up the housekeeping books at the end of each week; and to weigh all the stores you give out; and to time Mary whenever she is sent on an errand; and be sure you look the garden-gates yourselves after dusk; and have the lanthorn lighted, and go all over the house, and look to every fastening before you go to bed——"

Here the speaker was interrupted by the audible shudder of one of her hearers.

"I shall never have courage for such a task as that! I shall be in mortal terror of a ghost or a burglar popping out from some shadowy corner."

"Nonsense, Berenice," said the sage elder sister, who was scarcely two years her senior. "For a young woman who will be of age next month to talk in this way is ridiculous. I have performed all these duties faithfully ever since dear papa died, three years ago. If you are not to be trusted to take my place for a short time, I must write to Ruth and decline her invitation."

"And disappoint your old friend as well as yourself!" cried a third girl, a pretty blonde of nineteen. "No, no, Susanna, we will not let you do that. Berry is not so cowardly as she pretends; I can answer for her as well as myself that we shall obey all your injunctions."

"I could not go away happy if I thought you would not," said Susanna, severely. "You know that when we lost papa some ill natured people predicted that we three motherless girls would soon fritter away the small income he left us, and do all sorts of giddy, foolish things, and it has been my pride to show them that they were mistaken. We have kept house, and conducted ourselves like——"

"The three old maids of Lee," interposed Berry, in rather a doleful voice. "We go nowhere, see no one, never have new dresses but twice a year, and our only dissipations are the concert for the benefit of the schools and a few dry-as-dust lectures."

"And the gratification of knowing that the voice of calumny cannot reach us," resounded Susanna. "I am surprised at you, Berenice; you must be in a dissatisfied mood to-day. While I am away I hope you will try and master those two sonatas you have blundered over so long, as well as your duets with Adeline; and do not neglect your studies, darlings. You can read history together for two hours daily, and reserve your Italian and German for the evening. Of course you will take your Sunday classes as usual, and help in the night school, and visit my sick and poor district as well as your own. And if you can find leisure to finish that work I had undertaken for the missionary bazaar I shall be very much obliged to you. Keep busy, and you will not miss me."

But they did miss her most dreadfully.

Susanna—she never allowed herself to be called by endearing diminutives or curtailed the names of her sisters—had been so long the ruling spirit in the pretty old-fashioned house just outside the populous, pleasantly-situated Surrey village of Woodfield, that Adeline and Berenice may be excused for feeling "out of sorts" when the express train had carried her off to Winchester, to pay a long promised, often-deferred visit to a friend, whose husband, a military man, was stationed with his regiment at that city.

In her anxiety to guard against any defection from her rules, Susanna had written out half a dozen sets for the guidance of the servants, and also for her sisters, pinning them up in the most conspicuous places; but we are ashamed to say that, instead of setting down to their regular avocations after her departure, the two maids retreated to their chamber to trim their hats with the feathers and flowers Miss Laurie never permitted when she was at home; while Ada and Berry lounged—they never lounged in Susanna's presence—on the broad window-seat in the drawing-room.

There they amused themselves with wondering whether Mrs. Loudon saw much society, and whether, if she went to dinner parties, etc., she would suffer her guest to carry out her avowed intentions of spending her evenings at home, and of devoting herself to the babies.

When this topic had been worn threadbare, Berry proposed that they should do a little gardening, and even fetched her own and Ada's garden hats and gloves; but by the time they had quitted the house ano her idea dropped up.

Would Susanna be able to be as exclusive at Winchester as she was at home at Woodfield?

On the plea that her sisters were too young, and she herself without a chaperon, she had declined all visiting ever since the death of her father, and was especially careful not to make acquaintance with any of the new people who were occasionally induced by the beauty of the scenery to settle in the neighborhood.

The question was discussed all the more gravely because a fresh family had just come into Sylvan Lodge—a pretty villa residence that lay between the home of the Lauries and the church.

There were some charming children, and a graceful, delicate lady, who occupied the pew adjoining the seat of the sisters, and often bestowed on them glances of kindly interest.

But Susanna warned her sisters not to appear to see those glances.

She had learned from the vicar's wife that Mrs. Merstham's husband was in trade; and the daughters of a solicitor, who was a younger branch of a county family, had a position to keep up, and must not associate with persons in a grade of society quite beneath their own.

But while Ada and Berry talked of this they forgot their ostensible errand, and strolled up and down the sunny path leading from the front door to the tall, elaborate wrought gates that opened on to the high road.

Twice had they done this, when the shrieks of a child led them to open the said gates that they might ascertain the cause.

One of Mrs. Merstham's fair haired little girls was flying before a herd of bullocks that were being driven from the market.

Frantic with terror, she flew into the arms held out to receive her, was quickly carried into the garden, and her fears soothed with assurances of safety.

Like all lovable women, Ada and Berry were fond of children, and entered upon the task of comforting their sobbing visitor.

They had just succeeded in drying her tears and bringing back her smiles, when Mrs. Merstham herself appeared, having learned her child's danger, but not her timely rescue.

Agitation and the haste with which she had climbed the hill made this new visitor so faint, that common courtesy demanded that she should be led indoors, and pressed to remain until she felt better.

Here the civilities of their hostesses ought to have stopped, but so delighted were Ada and Berry with both mother and daughter that they were loth to let them depart.

Not till they had gone did either of the Misses Laurie remember how decidedly Mrs. Merstham had been tabooed by Susanna.

However, they took consolation in the thought, that under the circumstances they could not have acted differently, and then—talked of nothing else.

At parting Mrs. Merstham had said, very cordially, "You will come and see me?" and they had decided with a sigh that it would be impossible.

Yet on the morrow, when on their way to the village to attend to Susanna's pensioner's, how could they resist calling at Sylvan Lodge to give little Flossy the doll they had promised her, and make polite inquiries for her mother?

We are ashamed to say that Ada and Berry made so tardy an appearance in the village that afternoon, that their visits had to be unusually brief ones.

"Ne'er you mind that, missies, for I don't," said Goody Dobbins, one of Susanna's most promising proteges. "I do get so oncountable sleepy when that good sister o' yourn reads me them long chapters, that if I didn't manage to get a pinch o' snuff on the sly, I shouldn't be able to keep my eyes open. I'd a deal rayther have two or three nice little texties as I can keep in my head, than half a dozen o' Miss Laurie's sermons, though she do read 'em proper; I'm not denying it."

Goody was not the only matron in the district who answered Ada's and Berry's excuses for being so late in a similar spirit—one plain-spoken cottage mother saying frankly she didn't like ladies coming till her work was done, and she could spare time to listen to a preachment.

Still, the sisters went home with a weight on their consciences, for they knew they had not fulfilled Susanna's expectations.

Mrs. Merstham, at parting, had begged them to spend the following afternoon and evening with her; adding:

"If you play tennis bring your rackets, for I rather think a couple of girl-cousins of mine will drive over from Abbotsley to join us."

"Of course we shall have to send an excuse," said Ada to Berry. "Susanna would not approve of our going."

"But we have accepted—at least, our smiles and thanks led Mrs. Merstham to think we had; and she so nice, so motherly, we cannot behave rudely to her."

"But there is Susanna; you know we promised to obey all her injunctions."

"She did not know," argued Berry, "how we should be situated. Besides, we need not go again."

"I should decline," said Ada, "if you do."

"I wish you wouldn't throw the responsibility on me!" cried Berry, pettishly. "But if we should make up our minds to go, what could we wear?"

This query led to an inspection of their scanty wardrobes.

For the first time they eyed with something like scorn the quaker-gray costumes they had been wearing all the summer.

They had nothing else but the white brilliantes made for them the previous year by the village dressmaker for a school-treat, and bringing from it so many marks of little smudgy fingers that they had been put aside in disgust.

If it were but possible to have these washed and got up in time!

The cook—a brisk, good-natured woman, who had often expressed an opinion that it was hard for them pretty young creturs to be mewed up so—was now taken into their counsels, and oh! unconscious Susanna! all the household-work mapped out by you for your domestics was set aside that Ada and Berry might find crisp, clean gowns ready for them by three P. M.

These gowns were a little out of date in their extreme simplicity, and the only ornaments their wearers ventured to don were blue waistbands and bunches of azure flowers that matched their eyes; yet Mrs. Merstham thought she had never seen more charming figures than the blushing girls she hastened to greet and introduce to her other guests.

It was rather startling to be confronted by a couple of young men—their hostess's eldest son and a nephew of her husband—as well as the tall, fashionable, self possessed demoiselles her cousins Edna and Fanny Wilden; but these young people were so intelligent and unaffected that the embarrassment of the sisters soon wore off.

Tennis, played with all the verve that only the male sex can infuse into it, was followed by high tea on the lawn; and, when the dews began to fall, by music in Mrs. Merstham's prettily-arranged drawing-room.

Berry shrank from wading through the sonatas she did not love well enough to master, and Ada was equally reluctant to exhibit her want of skill; but both were excellent listeners to the gay little chansons and lively polkas and mazourkas discoursed by Edna and Fanny.

Presently, Mrs. Merstham took their place at the piano; and at the first notes of the waltz she played the tables were pushed aside, and Ada and Berry learned how much more agreeable it is to be whirled round a room supported by a good dancer than to waltz with a school friend or Susanna.

"It has been a delightful evening," they told each other at the close, "but we will not be led into such dissipation again."

It was by no fault of theirs that this resolution was not kept.

How could they know that Edna and Fanny would call on the morrow to take them for a drive, which ended at Sylvan Lodge—or that Mrs. Merstham, who was anxious to undertake some parish work, would arrange to accompany them to their respective districts the next morning, and then carry them home with her to help her arrange her plans?

And then, the next day was the anniversary of Flossy's birth, and she had been promised a picnic in the woods, but refused to go without her new friends; and the next was Sunday, and the whole party had agreed to walk to a very interesting church a few miles distant, and when Ada and Berry found themselves included, as a matter of course, now could they raise objections and refuse to go?

It was not till a letter came from Susanna, fixing the date of her return, that her young sisters began to feel guilty and miserable.

The rules laid down for their guidance had not been looked at; the sonatas were still in statu quo, though Berry could play all Harry Merstham's favorite bits from "Patience" and the "Mikado," and Ada could sing a score of the duets in which her sweet soprano voice blended excellently well with John Merstham's basso profundo.

As for the studies they were to have pursued, their French and German books had rarely been opened; and instead of Plutarch's "Lives of Ancient Heroes," they had been reading "The Young Ladies' Monitor," and sundry modern novels recommended by John and Harry Merstham.

What would Susanna say when she learned these facts, and they had to confess to sundry dereliction of duty besides? And how great a grief it would be to break off the acquaintance with Mrs. Merstham!

Instead of hastening to meet their sister with a joyful welcome, and being delighted at her return, both Ada and Berry found it difficult to conceal their embarrassment. In the six weeks to which her absence had been prolonged how many pleasant moments had been crowded! and how would they bear to resume the dull routine to which her strict rules had condemned them!

However, Susanna was too pleased to be at home once more to notice the downcast looks of her sisters.

In fact, she seemed to have exchanged characters with Berry; for while the latter only spoke in monosyllables, her formerly silent, reserved elder chattered gaily of all she had seen and done at Winchester.

Fatigued with her journey, Miss Laurie retired early, and so did the younger girls, but not to sleep. They dreaded the morning.

What would not Susanna think of them when she examined the work-basket, looked into the carelessly-kept housekeeping books, and questioned them as to their fulfilment of her many injunctions!

Was it a relief or only a lengthening of the chain when Susanna, who was dreamy and absent at breakfast, announced that she had some letters to write, which with her unpacking would occupy her till luncheon?

Ada was thankful for the respite, but Berry bit her lip, and moved restlessly on her seat.

She was longing to "have it over;" that while acknowledging she had failed in the obedience hitherto paid so cheerfully, she might add a protest against being compelled to break with her new friends.

She was nerving herself to this effort when Susanna rejoined her sisters, and picked up a book Ada dropped at her entrance.

"What is this—a novel? Where did you get it?"

"It was lent to us by Mrs. Merstham of Sylvan Lodge," replied Berry, as steadily as her fluttering pulses would permit; "we have seen a little—no, I will not deceive you—a great deal of her while you have been away, and this is how it happened."

After one sharp glance at the crimson faces of the two girls, Miss Laurie did not look up again till the story of their new acquaintance was told, but sat with bent head, turning over the pages of the book in her lap.

"It is very odd," she observed, after a lengthy pause, "but I met some connections of the Merstahms at Winchester. They are in trade; that is, they are manufacturers on a large scale like your friend's husband, and they have taught me to see the folly of some of the prejudices I have entertained I think;" and now it was Susanna's delicately chiselled features that were suffused, and her voice that faltered, "I think I will go with you to call on Mrs. Merstham. They tell me she is an excellent wife and mother; a refined, sensible woman, who will be a good friend and adviser to me as well as to you."

Ada and Berry could scarcely believe their ears; but a still greater surprise awaited them, when, as they entered the gate of Sylvan Lodge, a bluff, pleasant-looking, middle-aged man, who was sitting on the lawn, threw aside his newspaper and cigar and came to meet them.

"You see I could not stay away from you, Susy!" he exclaimed, as he possessed himself of Miss Laurie's hand. "Introduce me to your sisters. Have you told them they were going to lose you?"

Susanna meekly obeyed her lover's behest, and a brotherly salute was bestowed on both the astonished girls by this bridegroom-elect, who, with good-humored impertinence took upon himself the necessary explanations.

He had come up from the North to visit an old friend at Winchester, met with Susanna, and forgotten a long-kept resolve to live and die a bachelor.

There was a home ready for her near Bradford; which it should be his pride and pleasure to make a happy one, and there need not be any delay.

Everyone knew his faults, perhaps, better than his good qualities; and Susanna's objections, that he had not known her long enough, would not hold water.

He had ascertained that she had been a good daughter and sister, so he was satisfied she would prove an excellent wife.

"And you will be happier, dear girls," the bride-elect murmured, in their last confidential talk on the eve of her nuptials—"happier under the wiser, because gentler, rule of Mrs. Merstham than mine. I can see now that I held the cord too tight, and was often severe and prejudiced where a little more experience would have taught me to be kind and forbearing; but you will not cease to love me, will you?"

All the bridegroom's predictions have been verified.

Susanna, in learning to obey a more potent ruler than herself, has become a more amiable woman; and if she does not see much of Ada and Berry, it is because they also have entered the wedded state with John and Harry Merstham.

A YOUNG apprentice, one day at breakfast, suddenly exclaimed: "I am going blind! Acu! I am blind!"

His master alarmed, asked how it happened.

"Don't know," was the reply, "but I am so blind I cannot see the butter on my bread."

The good-natured master, who had once been young himself, begged his wife to put a bit of cheese on the lad's bread. After supper the old man inquired: "Well, my lad, how are your eyes now?"

"Thanks, Herr Knieriem, they are quite well again. I could distinctly see the bread through the cheese."

HUMILITY is most serviceable as an under garment, and should never be worn as an overcoat.

ALL the paths of life lead to the grave, and the utmost that we can do is to avoid the short cuts.

A Night Adventure.

BY E. W. A

"LUCIE," said my brother Fred one evening on coming home to dinner, "what would you say to spending Christmas-week in the country?"

"I should not have the least objection. But why do you ask?" I questioned. "Who is going to invite us?"

"It's not an invitation," replied Fred, carving the joint. "The fact is, my old chum, Arthur Dawson, who has a nice little practice in Hazelthorpe, you know, has an invitation to a very wealthy uncle's in Scotland, and he wants me to look after his clients while he is absent, else he can't go."

"But," remarked I, with solemn gravity, "can you leave yours?"

Fred went into a shout of laughter, in which I joined, for I regret to say a very low number would have covered my brother's clients, for Fred was only beginning to make a practice in order to marry, until when I acted as his housekeeper.

"Lucie, don't be sarcastic. It's bad form in a girl!" he exclaimed. "But what do you say?"

"Go by all means. It will at least be a change after stuffy apartments."

So it was agreed; and on Boxing day we started for Hazelthorpe, a pretty, well-populated town.

Arthur Dawson, though a bachelor, rented a small, picturesque villa in the outskirts, surrounded by a garden, and standing much retired.

This Fred and I were to live in while its master was absent.

Arthur Dawson was of middle height, slight build, with a well-looking, intellectual face, softened by the merriest of humors and most genial of smiles.

He had luncheon ready, and over it we soon got chatty and gay, that I seemed to have known him for ever so long.

He would persist most gravely in giving me instructions anent housekeeping, much displaying his own ignorance, until we could not eat for mirth; and Fred said he should defer his luncheon until Arthur Dawson had taken his departure.

"Which must be now!" exclaimed Arthur, looking at the clock and springing from his chair, or I shall miss the train. Miss Leigh, pray forgive me. I fear I have been uttering a lot of nonsense. I really am most grateful to you and your brother. I confide everything to your care. Here are all the keys. One cupboard you will find locked—there is no necessity to open it. Still, it is not a Bluebeard's cupboard. It contains law papers and some old family plate—very valuable; but in your charge it will be safe."

"I hope so," I answered. "It shall at least not be from want of taking care of it if it be not."

"Thanks a thousand times! I am so pleased at having made your acquaintance."

Saying farewell, and taking his portmanteau, he drove off in the fly that was waiting.

"I never saw him in better spirits," said Fred. "It's my belief he must be going to be married.

I gave a little mental sigh. I thought a girl would be fortunate to be the mistress of such a pretty little home.

Soon after Fred strolled down to the office, telling me with a laugh to remember the family plate.

I laughed also; but the thought of the valuable plate being in the locked cupboard was my one source of uneasiness and anxiety.

Some people do not like the country in winter. I think it far pleasanter than town, especially when the snow falls, and turns the dark trees into fairy vegetation.

I was not a moment dull, and wished that Arthur would be asked to prolong his visit.

His domestics were an elderly woman and a bright little maid of sixteen. The former had gone home for a holiday, the latter being quite enough for us.

The days passed only too rapidly, and the last of the old year came.

It was Fred's custom and mine always to see the new year in; therefore I was vexed, on his returning to dinner at two, to hear he would not be home that evening until late, if at all.

An important client of Arthur Dawson's had sent for him, and Fred must go.

Unfortunately the client resided nearly ten miles away, and at a spot at which no railways touched.

"And it looks fearfully like a heavy fall of snow, which, added to that already fallen, will make the roads impassable," he remarked. "If I should be prevented returning to night, you'll not be frightened, Lucie, at sleeping here alone?"

"Frightened!" I laughed. "What is there to fear? I have the servant. "I am only sorry it should be on old-year's night."

"It can't be helped, dear. I must not neglect Arthur's best client. So good-bye and—take care of the family plate."

Laughing, he hurried off and for the first time I felt dull.

My spirits soon revived, however, and in the evening I made up a good fire, and made the place look extra cheerful in case Fred returned; then, taking my work, sat down to wait.

It was about eight o'clock when Sarah, the maid, entered.

"Oh, if you please, miss," she said, "I'm very sorry, but there ain't any butter in the house, and I quite forgot to order the flour."

"That was very careless. What will you do?"

"I'll run down to the town, if you like, miss."

"Why, that's twenty minutes away, and the snow is deep."

"I don't mind it, miss. We must have butter."

That was certain, so I gave my consent, the less regretfully, as I believed a lover was the cause that the butter and flour had been forgotten until this hour, and that was why Sarah was grandly indifferent to the [illegible].

So I heard the door bang; she had gone, and I had the villa to myself.

How still everything was! I was remarking it mentally, about a quarter of an hour after Sarah's departure, when I was quite startled by a voice outside the glass doors of the room, where I was sitting, accompanied by a tapping on the pane.

"In mercy, let me in! If you be a Christian, help me, for the love of Heaven!"

I sprang up in alarm; the venetians were lowered, but so that anyone outside could see into the room.

Who could it be?—not Fred?

While I stood, the voice, weaker, more imploring, sounded again:

"Have you no mercy? I shall perish!"

I flew to the blind, and drew it up; the light from the room showed me a gentleman of about thirty, well-looking, fashionably dressed, with dark hair and moustache, leaning as if exhausted against the window-frame, while he strove with his handkerchief to staunch a wound on the temple.

His garb, his appearance, his evident indisposition, and the fact that the snow was beginning to fall thickly again, moved me to compassion, and in a second I had the doors open. He staggered feebly in, exclaiming, gratefully:

"Thank you!—thank you, madam, a thousand times! I owe my life, I believe, to you. But let me assist you to—to close the doors—and—lower the blind, or—I shall die! your warm charity."

"No, no; I can do it; remain where you are, if you please," I said. "But how, sir, did you get hurt?"

"Owing to the state of the roads," he replied. "I was riding, my horse slipped, and threw me. I fell against a stone, and I suppose for a while was insensible. When I recovered my horse was gone. Rising to my feet, I saw a light through the snow. It was this window, so I came to it."

"I am glad you did," I remarked. "I am sure you are welcome to what help I can give."

He thanked me earnestly, then took my advice to lie down on the sofa, and let me tie the handkerchief round his head.

He soon appeared to fall into a doze, and I, resuming my work, waited impatiently for Sarah's return.

I think they must have been making the butter, she was so long.

Directly I heard her, I went out and told what had happened. She stole in on tiptoe to take a peep at him, and returned enthusiastic.

"Oh, lor', miss," she whispered; "ain't he 'andsome!"

"Never mind that, Sarah," I replied. "What are we to do with him? Now he has rested, he finds that he twisted his ankle, or the horse must have kicked it, for he cannot move it without pain. Yet we can't keep him here all night."

"Oh! miss, you couldn't turn the poor gentleman out in such weather as this! The snow's just awful!"

My heart was as loth as Sarah's, yet I felt the exceeding awkwardness of my position.

The stranger was certainly a gentleman, and entitled by suffering to our hospitality.

I thought it all over, and resolved to err on the side of charity.

There was the spare bedroom, where Fred slept. I would offer him that, if he would take it.

He did so gratefully, without any demur, overwhelming me with thanks, regretting deeply the trouble he must be, but saying he felt he could never get to the town.

So, having accepted refreshment, he retired, and I, bidding Sarah come in to keep me company, sat down by the fire, feeling little inclined to speak, resolved to see the new year in, though Fred was not there.

It was about half-past eleven when Sarah, who had been nodding in her chair, abruptly exclaimed:

"O! miss, suppose he should be a thief!"

"Good gracious! girl, what do you mean?"

"Why, I've a friend who says there's a lot of 'em about, and that they try to look like gentlemen at times, mine."

"Nonsense!" I remarked. "They may try, but they can't succeed."

Yet Sarah's suggestion had startled me, and a cold shiver ran through my veins as I thought of the family plate. Supposing he were a thief?

The idea got such a hold upon me, as also the consequences, that I could not shake it off. I was more nervous, as I was risking the property of others, not my own.

Taking off my shoes and bidding Sarah, after doing the same, come with me, we crept to the door and listened.

All was still—not a sound.

As we were going away I perceived that the door had a brass bolt outside. Here was security.

I shot it noiselessly, and if the stranger were a thief, I now had him safely a prisoner until morning.

While we were creeping downstairs the churchbells broke forth ringing in the new year.

Both Sarah and I declared we could not go to bed, so I told her to lie on the sofa while I sat on the chair.

She soon fell asleep, but never was night so long to me.

I started at every sound, and when I dozed dreamed of horrid men in crape masks forcing open the cupboard to get at the family plate.

Finally, when I awoke, to my joy I found the wintry sun streaming into the room.

It was morning, and we were safe; better still almost—so was the cupboard.

Soon we placed things in order; Sarah got breakfast, and we waited the descent of the stranger.

Eight—nine. He did not come. I listened at the door—not a sound. I—yes, I really did—I looked through the keyhole. What I saw was that the window was open!

Had he gone?

Rising, I hastened into the garden. There were footprints beneath the window, as if a man had dropped down and walked away.

Running back, I no longer hesitated to try to open the door. The lock yielded. The room was empty; on the table was a piece of written paper to this effect:

"DEAR MADAM:

"Finding the door locked, I have had to make use of the window, having an early appointment. Thanks for your hospitality; it has saved me."

"Oh, Sarah!" I cried, blushing with shame, "why did I bolt the door? What must he have thought?"

"It's no good regretting it now, miss; and you was right to be on the safe side."

Consoling myself with that reflection, I went downstairs, and in less than half an hour Fred returned.

On hearing our adventure, he looked grave. He said I ought to be careful, such things as giving strange men shelter were risky—still I was not to blame.

I could not have turned a gentleman out in such a night, and it was well it had ended as it had.

After breakfast he went to his room to dress for the office. Almost immediately I heard his voice:

"Lucie, where is my brown ulster? and where's my deerstalker?"

I ran upstairs; Fred stood in the middle of the room—our eyes met—the truth flashed upon us. The gentlemanly stranger had taken them.

It was so; not only those articles but others were also missing.

What did it mean?

The answer was given by Sarah, who at this moment came rushing up-stairs, after a chat with the baker.

"Oh, miss, there was nigh such a robbery, at Hazelthorpe last evening. A man, quite a gentleman to look at, Mr. Stubbs says," cried the girl, breathlessly, "went into the jeweller's and while their backs were turned, he took a tray of rings and ran, but they nearly caught him, and all the rings went over the shop, and he escaped and the police pursued him right out of town, when he got away over the fields, and——"

Sarah paused, her eyes and mouth alike round.

"Oh-h-h," she gasped, divining the truth, "it was him!"

It was indeed!

Need I say how indignant I was at having been so taken in? In having helped the thief to elude justice? or how glad that I had shot the bolt upon him?

Neither will I recount the quizzing of which I was the object.

It was a standing joke against me for many a day with Fred, and silly with Arthur Dawson also.

"Well," I remarked to the latter, "I did not lose your family plate at any rate."

"It would have been a great pity if you had," he said, seriously. "Allow me to show it to you, Miss Leigh."

Opening the cupboard he brought out a plate of the veritable willow pattern, and so far valuable.

Fred roared. I tried to look angry, but it was no good; and half vexed, half laughing, I exclaimed:

"Mr. Dawson, I'll never forgive you."

Did I forgive him? Well, I suppose I must have done, for my home is at Hazelthorpe now, and every old-year's night, the anniversary of my adventure, Fred and his wife pass with me—and Arthur.

TAMSUI is a province in China which is afflicted with too many mashers, and the Governor has had to issue a proclamation pointing out to them the error of their ways. The bright-colored jackets and waistcoats of the young men, embroidered at neck and sleeves with flowers and other ornaments, are shocking, he declares, to the view of sober respectable citizens, who know that money should not be squandered by men on such things. Holding that it is a governor's duty to watch over the behavior of the people committed to his charge, he warns them that young men dressed in a foolish extravagant way will be arrested and punished, and that the responsibility of their fathers, elder brothers and tutors will not be overlooked.

WE must labor unceasingly to render our piety reasonable, and our reason pious.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The Osage tribe of Indians is said to be the richest nation in the world. The tribe numbers 1501 men, women and children. They have in the United States Treasury $7,758 000 of their own money, drawing 5 per cent. interest. But, besides this, they have 1 470 000 acres of land, equal to just 1000 acres apiece. The land would sell for $10 an acre, or $10,000 for each individual portion. This makes each Indian worth $10,171.

A slaughter of swallows has been organized on a large scale along the southern seaboard of France. The poor creatures alight on wires provided for the purpose, tired out after long flights to and from Italy and the East, and they are killed in thousands by means of electric currents. "This modern massacre of the innocents has been ordained in the interests of fashion the slaughtered birds being used for the decoration of bonnets. Humane people will probably make an agitation on the subject, and there is some thought of petitioning the prefects of the Southern department to use their authority to prevent the extension and continuance of this ornithological crime."

The howling swell nowadays has three dress coats. One has a lapel six faced collar. Another has a shawl-roll satin collar, still another has a velvet collar, and one of these will be donned on various occasions, while the others, mayhap, are being pressed and having the powder or salad stains eradicated, merely as a matter of fancy at the time. In length the winter overcoat will extend to the top of the knee cap. There will be a quantity of the fine rough finish chinchillas worn, but the greater variety of colors shown this season, in meltons, kerseys, and dull finish beavers indicate clearly what the majority of the top coats will be made of. Trousers will be fashioned upon the same roomy cut straight out of last Spring, with perhaps a shade more of inclination to the peg-top. That there will be a number of white vests worn during the cold weather is evidenced by the showing of examples of special Winter textures of linen and cotton mixed, and woven as heavy and as firm as melton cloth. The material is washable, and when made up is rich and elegant to a degree calculated to win indorsement from men of discernment in the matter of attire.

The following remarks are translated from a Chinese journal published at Pekin, and are part of an article giving the impressions of a Chinese lady who recently traveled through Europe and America. When women go to court they regard a bare skin as a mark of respect, and on ordinary occasions when they meet their parents they must apply their mouths to the right and left lips of the elder with a smacking sound, which is exceedingly strange. Women consider a large bust and a small waist as desirable; but while the waist can be compressed so as to be made small, the bust can not be naturally enlarged. A great number, then, have a contrivance of wickerware concealed under the bodice on either side of the chest; and this they consider an adornment. Women who are shortsighted will mount spectacles in public; even young girls in their teens will do the same, and so walk along the streets, and it is not regarded strange. If a man does not smoke or drink he is universally respected, and it is considered meritorious. As regards women, most of them drink, but exceedingly few smoke.

The favorite ladies' club in London, where ladies' clubs are well known and very successful, is the Alexandra, named after the popular wife of the Prince of Wales, of course, who has more things and people named for her than any other woman in the United Kingdom, not even excepting the Queen. It is the very smartest and most exclusive association of the sort in England—only those who have been presented at court being eligible for membership—and just now there is a very pretty quarrel distracting the organization. No male creature over 12 years of age is allowed to darken its threshold, and even the attendants are all women to a man—so to speak. It has several bed chambers on the upper floor, and even the most carefully guarded woman is allowed to spend a night in London and put up at this club. It is not in the least masculine in its tendency. There is no drinking allowed, except of wine with meals; no games are played for money, and heretofore there has been no smoking, but last month on the committee board was written up a motion to add a smoking room, and the motion was signed by two well known and titled ladies. Next day below this proposal was written, "Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Jones propose that Lady Quelquechose and Lady Nemo are not fit members of this club." And then there was such a monkey and parrot time that the club really began to resemble a man's organization.

THE art of good manners is to hit the right meaning between courtesy and insincerity, and to combine perfect graciousness with perfect truth; and this cannot be done unless courtesy springs from the right source—general good will towards all mankind.

Our Young Folks.

AT THE PICNIC.

BY L. F. S.

BERT and Fred had been round by the circus, and when they returned, their two little sisters, Effie and Meg, had planned a picnic.

Such glorious weather was it, hot and glowing; just a fine day for a picnic tea somewhere in a nice, breezy, shady place, with plenty of good things to eat and to drink.

Not wise little lads were those two to go round by the circus, or the camping-ground either, seeing their mamma had forbidden them to go and watch the wonderful feats of horsemanship.

Nay, they had made friends with Bill and Jem, two of the favored boy riders, who had allowed them even to peep into the stable of some of the dear little ponies, and more than once had they stood and admired the airing of some of them, trotting round and round the field, their dainty little hoofs scarce deigning to touch the ground.

This morning a waggish fit had seized our two heroes, and Bill and Jem were just as waggish as they; even the ponies were frisky when the boys tried to catch them and put on their pretty burnished harness—they were all a party of rollicking young things together, their masters gone into the town.

"When the cat's away, the mice will play," quoth Bill, winking at Jem; and he invited our lads to enter the field, which they did.

"Now we're going to harness 'em, for we're off at mid-day, or thereabouts, and you'll see what clever chaps we circus folk are at the job," said Jem.

"Of course you are real dapper fellows," declared Bert, with a sly wink at Fred, when the circus lads turned their heads a moment.

Ah, well! Bert never told how he did it, but he managed to slip a tiny fir-cone inside the girths of the two mettlesome little ponies: just the very two which Bill and Jem were to mount to gather in the rest.

Oh, the fun of it! they were no sooner on the creatures' backs than they were on the gr en sward again, head over heels, on and off, like two tumblers, their steeds bolting here and there, round and round the field.

"Here, you lads, what are you up to?" cried one of the grooms, coming to the rescue, and looking so fiercely in earnest that Bert and Fred stepped outside the enclosure to safer and freer ground.

"We can't catch the ponies by no manner of ways," replied Bill, while Jem very soberly mounted his steed, and once more went head over heels to the ground for his pains.

"'Tis for all the world like Mose and Pete in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,'" said Bert, highly delighted at the success of his handiwork.

Indeed, he had slipped into the stables, and hidden this and that of the ponies' harness and trappings, while the laughing, the shouting and the tumbling up and down had been going on.

There would be a pretty to-do and outcry presently—ah, yes! it was good fun watching it all.

Well, of course the groom detected the fir cones in time, and came near to cuffing the ears of the two sorry riders for their folly.

"Just as if we should put things there to make ourselves fall off; we could fall off without doing that, and a deal easier too, if we wanted to," said Jem, much aggrieved at the accusation.

Which the groom could not gainsay or contradict, so he bade them go on with their work in double quick time, or the masters would be back from town before it was done, and then there would be a stormy scene.

Ha! ha! ha! how Bert and Fred laughed in their sleeves, crouching under the hedge and listening to the confusion the shouting, the searching for this and that, going on inside the tent—Bill, Jem and the grooms, all pell-mell, in a great hurry and confusion.

And, in the midst of it all, round walked the masters.

No very lordly proprietors were they: it was not a first-rate circus, Bert remarked to Fred after the two men had passed by. Then back they came again.

"Ah, young Turks! what are you doing here?" inquired one of them, eyeing the two very much like a cat glowering at two innocent mice.

"Please, sir, we only came round to have a look at the circus from the outside," said Bert mildly; while Fred, like a startled echo, said, "Only that."

"Well, I can't help your looking, seeing you have eyes, and as the saying is, 'a cat may look at a king.' But the inside's the place for seeing what's to be seen; and, if I could have my will, not one eye should see the outside as wouldn't come in to see the inside," growled the man.

"But one must see the outside before we can see the inside, or else you must shut your eyes," said Bert, jumbling up his pronouns together in a sort of frightened bravery and wit.

"Oh, ay! a mighty sharp shooter you call yourself, don't ye? Come and link in with us; we want a cute lad like you to fill a place in our band," was the man's response.

"Oh, no—no, thank you," stammered Bert, his very finger-tips tingling, his cheeks paling, yet rather proud of the compliment paid him—he considered worthy to join a circus!

As for Fred, he clutched him nervously by the sleeve, whispering, "We'd best go."

"Yes, please, sir, we'd best go," observed Bert meekly.

"Well, I didn't tell you to stay," said the surly one who talked with them—his companion had gone on and entered the tent, where the noise, the hubbub, the seeking and searching, were in full cry.

Thus it was, from all this, that the two boys had come when their two sisters, Effie and Meg, met them at the gates with the tidings.

"We're going to have a picnic this afternoon, and want you boys to come; because boys can come."

Here Effie came to a standstill.

"Because boys can take care of you—I never saw such cowards as girls are!" spoke Bert, at a venture.

"Well, we're not cowards, and we don't want to be taken care of, but we want someone to help carry the hampers," returned Effie, in lofty integrity.

"And I hope you'll pack no doll creatures into the concern," was Bert's next speech.

"It is not very likely that I should pack dolls and jam tarts together," said Effie gaily.

"Oh! jam tarts—that's a jolly good girl!"

Both boys cut a caper at this. Where is the boy that does not get excited over jam tarts?

"And where's to be the camping ground, I wish to know," asked Bert, his caper over.

"Oh, you choose; you'll have to carry the hamper and choose the place; that's boy's work," his sister told him.

"Well, I vote round by the Elm Knoll; it's shady there, and we shall have a good view of the circus. 'Tis off this afternoon, and 'twill be almost certain to pass that way."

So proposed the boy, and his sisters assented, nobody saying them nay nor forbidding them.

Bert and Effie took the hamper, Meg a small basket full of odds and ends, Fred the camp kettle—Sukie, he called it—sauntering along with the air of a very big boy.

Now they were at the place of meeting; the lads lit the fire, the girls laid the cloth, which surely would have groaned, had it been a table, with the good things thereon.

Such a giant-cake, such dough-nuts, such delicious bread and butter, with a pot of honey, such tantalizing jam tarts, to say nothing of a miniature mountain of sandwiches, piled, and piled, and piled again.

Ah! the feast soon began after that. The tea was fragrant and so delightfully smoky that it required several lumps of sugar in every cup to make it palatable: so said the boys.

And good-natured Effie was very complying, and gave them sugar to their heart's content—like the fairy god-mother, they love her.

And now, while they were sipping their first cup of tea, came the clash and the clamor of music, borne along on the summer winds, now near, now afar—all that could be delightful to the easily-pleased children.

And next into full view came the whole circus procession, winding on along the road at no great distance, a cloud of dust following it, the grand car in front ablaze as with burnished gold, a train of pretty ponies toiling on with their beautiful burdens, which, the children said, were no burdens to them at all.

Then followed the fairy riders, in a shimmer of silver and gold, on pretty ambling palfreys.

The sun's rays seemed to run athwart the intervening space, as if to go with them, the birds had ceased their songs, as if to hearken to the music—that clashing burst of music, from trumpets, cornets and many-voiced instruments of sweet sounds.

"Look at the elephants! see the camels!" cried delighted Effie, as the clumsy, harmless creatures brought up the rear, like a huge tail to the wonderful procession.

Now they were alongside the merry revellers, not a stone's throw between them and the road along which they were passing.

"There go Bill and Jem!"

And there they went—minute warriors clad in burnished armor, mounted on chargers, champing, curvetting, as in high mettle.

"There go Bill and Jem; hip hip-hurrah!" shouted Bert, as if courting all that followed, waving his handkerchief in one hand and a piece of cake in the other high over his head.

Then, there came out from the procession, from somewhere, two ill-looking fellows, the circus masters who had talked to the two boys under the hedge in the morning; out they came, as in answer to Bert's call, leaping over the ground between them, and one carrying a knobbed stick.

A few strides and they were there, bearing down upon them like two hawks upon a nest of doves.

There was no help for them; let what would happen, they must wait there, and brave the worst.

"You're the two young fellows as give us and our men all that pack of trouble this morning," spoke Number One.

While Number Two grinned and said, "Twere a game of odds this morning; now we've come to make it even;" and down he dropped upon the ground, very like a tailor about to begin work, by the side of Meg.

Of course she darted up with a cry and made towards Bert, to shelter by him, as under a rock, but that terrible man with the stick was scowling down upon him, and this is what he was saying:

"You were the hiders this morning, you and your mate; now I and my mate'll turn the tables on ye, and play hiders—we'll hide your vittles. Ha! ha! ha!"

"You'll do no such thing!" replied valiant Bert, turning pale, yet clenching his fist.

"Who says I won't?"

"I do!"

"Ha! ha! when I says won't, I means won't; and when I says will, I means will; and I says I'll hide your vittles all down to a certain red lane as I knows on. Ha! ha!"

Oh, that horrid laugh! and how threateningly he shook the knobbed stick in Bert's face.

As for Fred and Meg: he who sat squatting on the ground by the festive cloth was helping himself to this and that, and saying to them:

"This is quite a nice little spread," chuckling to himself.

The two children turned away weeping, Effie interposing like a little motherly bodyguard between them and danger. Whither should they go?

She would not cry, but bore herself with meek dignity, as became a young lady of seven, and the ruling spirit of a picnicking party.

"You have no right here, spoiling our picnic," protested Bert, who, in spite of the threatening stick, felt he ought to say something big and stout-hearted.

"No right—see if we haven't a right; look at my mate there—he's in possession, and possession is nine points of the law; even the lawyers says that. Ha! ha! ha!" so the fellow defied him.

And "Ha! ha! ha!" came like a mocking echo from the other, who sat cramming his mouth with cake and honey, and drinking tea from Effie's cup, glancing to right and left of him, as cool as a cucumber, as Bert said afterwards.

"Now be off with ye, or I'll make circus folk out of the whole lot of ye!" so threatened he with the stick, the two little girls hearkening, like two bundles of shivers; "and when ye next plays with the fire again, mind ye don't burn your fingers."

He pushed Master Bert behind him, and sat down by his companion's side—and oh! didn't they gobble and eat!

How soon had the cloud swooped down on them, and, as it were, shut out all their joy.

The clang of the music was still in the air, the circus procession a glittering mass, moving on, moving on, the sunbeams following, and as if centred there, nowhere else; for clouds were in the sky, real big pearly clouds, which bespoke rain.

Ay, and it came, a down-pouring, splashing deluge, ere the discomfited party were well on their way home—everything was against them—their picnic spoilt.

"A pack of drowned rats!" Thomas the gardener called them, as they went in, wet through, at the back gates.

But this is what their mamma said to them, when she had clad them in dry garments, and given them their tea:

"Your half-hearted obedience, my boys, which was really disobedience in letter and spirit, lies at the root of to-day's disaster. If you had kept away from the circus, and practical joking with the circus boys, as I bade you, all would have been well. But now you've spoilt your own pleasure and that of your sisters. The bitterest fruit of wrongdoing is to bring sorrow to loved ones as well as ourselves."

THE SIGNAL-MAN.

BY HENRY FAITH.

I AM going to ask you to accompany me to a railway station, and have a peep at the signal man.

He is quite out of the way, for he must be quiet, and not annoyed or disturbed; if you worry him with questions he may make a mistake, and send a train over a wrong line.

If so, many people would perhaps be killed or injured, the signal-man would be put in prison, and you would be very sorry.

So you see the signal-man must be out of the way of other people when he is on duty.

But we are invisible! So we will walk along the line and as far as the high wooden steps like a ladder which lead up to the box.

You must take care not to fall over the wires which are carried along the ground on little posts with "wheels" let into them, upon which the wires are taken to the signal-posts far away.

On those posts are signals which fall down into a sloping position when the wire is pulled in, and watch stand up horizontally straight out from the post when the wire is let go again.

You have all seen these posts and signals, but I think you have not all seen the interior of the signal-box, and the manner in which the wires are moved by the "levers" or handles inside.

There is a long row of handles of different colors, the ends of bright steel, and these "levers" have labels on them to show the points that must be opened for the train.

The signal-man and his assistant have not only to signal trains up and down, but also to set the rails in the right direction for the trains to pass through, or to go on another (side) line.

This is at large stations, but our signal-man is alone; he has perhaps eight handles to attend to in his little square cabin.

In this room, or "box," are a stove to keep him warm, a desk and book to note the time the trains pass, two telegraphic instruments with bells which ring a certain number of times for certain trains, or engines without trains, and the two toy signal-posts, which work in the box just as the big posts and signals work outside, with this difference, and a very important difference it is: the man in the box cannot alter the toy signals in his cabin.

They are altered by the men in the boxes on each side of him, up and down the line.

Our signal-man can also alter the "toy signals" in the other men's boxes: so a mistake is prevented.

Our man cannot let a train pass his cabin if he sees that the man next to him has the toy signal up at "danger," a red arm. This red toy arm says to our signal-man—"There is a train on the line near me, two miles from you, which you cannot see. Mind you keep back any train on the same line till the train here has got away."

As soon as the train in front has got away safely, "ting-ting" goes the bell in our signal-man's box, the red toy arm drops, the telegraphic instrument, which had a card in it saying "On" (which meant signal against train), changes by electricity to "Off."

Our man has pulled his lever, and he knows his signal, far away on the line at the corner, is working right.

He can see it to-day plainly; but suppose there was a fog, or a misty night came on, then he couldn't see it or the lamps; and so his instrument tells him that his own signals are in good order, while the "toy signals" tell him that the line is "clear" in front both ways for trains, or "not clear," as the case may be.

We watch our signal-man. He has clear, bright, watchful eyes, he has a beard, and he does not wear any coat.

Sometimes in summer he has neither coat nor waistcoat on, for it is warm work to pull such heavy levers and so many yards of wire to move a signal, perhaps, three hundred yards down the line. We stand back so as not to interfere. Listen!

"Ting ting, ting ting!"

A train is warned from a place five miles off. Our signal-man does not do unless he sends one "ting" back, which says:

"All right as far as this place."

Then he sends other "tings" to the station beyond him again. If the line is clear there he pulls his signals off to let the train pass by his station.

Here it comes! We can see the steam above the trees. The engineer is looking for the tall signal and the arm.

The arm hangs down; then he knows the line is clear as far as the box beyond our signal-man, and he rushes through the station where we are with a warning scream to waiting passengers to stand back from the edge of the platform. This is an express train.

As soon as the train has passed the signal away at the corner so many yards off, our signal-man moves a lever and lets the long wire slacken.

The lever bangs back in a second, the wire is released; it releases a weight on the distant post, the weight falls, and pulls up the arm.

Then the signal-man wipes his hands and the handle of the lever, and, as he has already noted the time, he turns to his time book.

What is he writing? He is putting down the exact time that the train was "warned up," and the time it passed his box, so if any questions are asked he can say whether it was late or whether the engineer was running before time.

Then, if no bells ring, he can open his window and look out, and enjoy the air; but he must not leave his box unless the points or wires are stiff, and then, before he can attend to them he signals to the station for someone to come to him.

NOT SUCH A FOOL AS HE LOOKED.—A supposed imbecile made his escape from an English prison in a remarkable manner. Being ill, he was allowed to sit near a fire, at which was a clothes horse of three folds. Watching his opportunity, he took the clothes horse into the yard and converted it into a ladder, by means of which he scaled the wall which was between thirty and forty feet high.

LIFE consists not of a series of illustrious actions or elegant enjoyments. The greater part of our time passes in compliance with necessities in the performance of daily duties, in the removal of small inconveniences, in the procurement of petty pleasures; and we are well or ill at ease, as the main stream of life glides on smoothly, or is ruffled by small obstacles and frequent interruptions.

So many persons annually disappear in Corea from the ravages of tigers that hopeless debtors and defaulters take advantage of the presumption thus created in case of a missing person to leave their torn garments at the border of some wood and privately decamp. "Caught by a tiger" has become to be equivalent in Corea to our well-known American phrase, "Escaped to Canada."

OF OLD AGE.

BY A. P.

Old age is coming on;
  Old age, the sere and gray;
The strength of youth is gone,
  Faded and flown away;
  The shades of dying day
Are more than ever rife;
  And now reflect I may
How have I spent my life!

I bear in mind the dawn
  Of love's first golden ray,
When all my heart was drawn
  To one both grave and gay.
  In time she whispered "Yes,"
And thus became my wife;
  Her years my years betray—
How have I spent my life?

When Time comes by to slay,
  I will not fear his knife,
But let the angels say
  How I have spent my life.

SOME WILL CURIOS.

The whims and vagaries of testators seem to be of an endless variety. They seem to be proverbial.

Almost daily we may notice paragraphs detailing bequests of a more or less extraordinary nature; and laterly the United States would appear to have been more prolific than other regions of singular wills.

Quite recently, the late Lord Newborough made the following curious provisions in his will. He gave most explicit directions that, after a certain period elapses, his body is to be exhumed and reinterred in Bardsey Island.

This island, it will be remembered, lies to the north of Cardigan Bay, and is reputed to have had no fewer than 20,000 saints buried in its soil.

Only the other day, too, Henry Eberle, of Frankford, left an estate valued at $35,000 to be expended in the erection of a monument over his grave.

His will was executed in 1868, and gives minute instructions as to the monument. Three shares of the cemetery stock are bequeathed to the Cemetery Company, the income of which is to maintain the monument in good repair.

A far more extraordinary will than either of the above, was, however, made by Solomon Sanborn, of Medford, Massachusetts, who was a hatter by trade.

He left his body to the late Professor Agassiz and Dr. O. W. Holmes, to be by them prepared in the most skilful and scientific manner known to anatomical art, and placed in the anatomical museum of Harvard College.

Two drumheads were to be made of the skin. Upon one was to be inscribed Alexander Pope's "Universal Prayer," on the other, the "Declaration of Independence"; and then they were to be presented to the testator's "distinguished friend," the drummer of Cohasset.

This presentation was subject to the condition that on the 17th of June, at sunrise, every year, the drummer should beat on the drumheads at the foot of Bunker's Hill, the spirit-stirring strains of "Yankee Doodle."

Another American, who died within the last few months, reflects in his will that he was shunned by his relatives, "who cannot, now that I am dying, do much for my comfort."

But Dr. Wagner takes on these relatives a ghastly revenge. To his brother, Napoleon Bonaparte, he bequeathes his left arm and hand; to another brother, George Washington, his right arm and hand; to others his legs, nose, ears, etc. Further, the testators leaves $1,000 for the dismembering of his body.

Among other testators who have displayed this remarkable tendency to leave legacies in the form of portions of their bodily frames, or the frame in its entire condition, may be instanced Dr. Ellerby and Jeremy Bentham.

The will of Dr. Ellerby, who died in London, in 1827, contained the following bequests:

"I bequeath my heart to Mr. W., anatomist; my lungs to Mr. R.; and my brain to Mr. F., in order that they may preserve them from decomposition; and I further delare that if these gentlemen shall fail faithfully to execute these my last wishes in this respect, I will come and torment them until they shall comply.

In spite of this threat, however, the beneficiaries declined their legacies.

Jeremy Bentham, again, bequeathed his body to a hospital, with instructions that his skeleton should be prepared and cleaned, and his head preserved entire, and that he should—when thus treated—preside at the meetings of the hospital directors

Whether he was ever made to actually preside is doubtful: but it is certain that the skeleton was preserved, and may now be seen in the hospital museum. The preservation of the head was, however, bungled, and one of wax had to be substituted.

Many wills have references to the domestic felicity, or the reverse, experienced by those who executed them.

As an example of the former, we may give the following passage from the settlement of Lady Palmerston, an ancestress of the celebrated Premier.

Referring to her husband, she says, "As I have long given you my heart, and my tenderest affections and fondest wishes have always been yours, so is everything else that I possess; and all that I possess; and all that I can call mine being already yours, I have nothing to give but my heartiest thanks for the care and kindness you have, at any time, shown me, either in sickness or in health, for which God Almighty will, I hope, reward you in a better world." Then, for "form's sake," follow several specific bequests.

As a specimen of the opposite sort, we may first of all instance the will of Mr. Rogers, of Dublin. In April, 1888, Mrs. Rogers disputed her husband's will in the Dublin Probate Court, on the ground of his deficiency of testamentary capacity. The will contained the clause.

"In consequence of the ill-behavior and bad conduct of my wife, I cut her off with one shilling, and she is not to have either hand, act, or part in the management, or educating of my children."

The evidence showed that the deceased was jealous of his spouse, who at the time of the marriage was 18 years of age, while he was 70. The jury found a verdict establishing the will.

Henry, Earl of Stafford, again, inserted the following in his testamentary disposition:

"I give to the worst of women, who is guilty of all ills—the daughter of Mr. Grammont, a Frenchman—whom I have unfortunately married, five and forty brass half-pence, which will buy her a pullet for her supper—a greater sum than her father can often make over to her—for I have known when he had neither money, nor credit, for such a purchase, he being the worst of men and his wife the worst of women in all debaucheries. Had I known their characters I had never married their daughter, nor made myself unhappy."

Grains of Gold.

Gifts are often losses.

The sting of reproach is the truth of it.

He that always complains is never pitied.

Envy shoots at others and wounds itself.

He must stoop low that hath a low door.

Vows made in storms are forgotten in calms.

In prosperity caution, in adversity, patience.

Zeal without knowledge is like fire without light.

In the land of promises a man may die of hunger.

If you are not very clever, you had better be conciliatory.

We often need those reproofs which we have given to others.

History is not fable agreed upon, but truth disagreed upon.

Few persons live to day, but are preparing to do so to-morrow.

The best way to condemn bad traits is by practicing good ones.

A little seeing saves much looking; a little speaking saves much talking.

Do not think so much of the faults of others that you forget your own.

Remember that impertinence isn't wit any more than insolence brilliancy.

A quarrel is, nine times out of ten, merely the fermentation of a misunderstanding.

When the world has once got hold of a lie, it is astonishing how hard it is to get it out of the world.

Some write, talk and think so much about vice and virtue that they have no time to practice either.

Femininities.

A woman in Taunton, Mass., keeps 50 cats.

A jewel of a woman is better than a woman of jewels.

Women are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of men.

It is not being deceived, but undeceived, that renders us miserable.

The newest theatre bonnet is called the Mouse because it is so tiny.

Saying one thing and doing another burns the candle at both ends.

Fashionable women in London walk the streets wearing single eye-glasses.

Don't put meat and vegetables into the same compartments of the refrigerator.

We are very apt to think that the only bell there is in the world is on the back of our own neck.

In all ages since Adam's marriage it has been good for some men to be alone, and for some women also.

"No," sobbed the widow, "I shall never find John's equal, but p-perhaps I c-an find h-his equivalent."

A diamond chicken roosting on one leg in the centre of a crescent of rubies and emeralds is a fashionable oddity.

Women are fond of fiction and get it, too. In some cases manhood arrives late and in others does not get here at all.

Among scarfpin novelties a variegated gold acorn resting on a background formed by two leaves is one of the most recent.

Of the nearly 300 women who were recently examined in New York for appointment as customs inspectors only 52 passed.

A four leaf clover, having diamonds and rubies alternately in the centre of each petal, is a lace pin that deserves commendation.

A Western paper gallantly remarks that "the lady prisoners in our jail are about the most desperate lot we have seen in a long time."

Don't delude yourself into the belief that you are an exception as far as sleep is concerned; the normal average of sleep is eight hours.

A woman of 97 in Massachusetts claims she has smoked tobacco for half a century, her average consumption of the weed being 12 bowlsful a day.

Boiling water will remove tea stains and many fruit stains. Pour the water through the stain, and thus prevent its spreading over the fabric.

Emma: "Your hat is perfectly charming, and it suits you so well!" Marie: "Oh, yes; but if you only knew what a fearful fainting fit it cost me!"

A new feature of a dinner table, by high authority: A "joint bouquet" placed between each lady and gentleman, to be divided and appropriated after dinner.

Clusters of honeysuckle and daisies cling ing to the handle of a well-worn stable make a beautiful lace-pin when represented in enamel and variegated gold.

One ounce each of cloves, cedar and rhubarb, pulverized together, makes a good perfume for closets and drawers, and the mixture helps to prevent moths.

Queen Victoria has given up champagne and claret and taken to whisky and apollinaris water. This is said to be by the advice of Sir William Jenner, the court physician.

The thick and thin of it: Fat Woman: "Oh, ain't these mosquitoes awful!" Thin Woman: "They never bite me." Fat Woman: "Of course not; they live on blood, not bones."

"Well, what do you think of the new neighbors who have moved in next door, Mrs. Pryer?" "I haven't had a chance to form an opinion. They haven't had a washing day yet."

A woman in Maine, speaking of the sudden death of her husband, is reported to have said: "Before he died he ate a gallon of oysters for $100, and cleared $5 for his family, his funeral only costing $10."

When a man fails people sigh and say, "There must have been a woman at the bottom of it," but they are never just enough to say when a woman sins, "There must have been a man at the bottom of it."

According to a Michigan contemporary, "when a certain old lady of Cadmus, Lenawee county, dresses for a state occasion, she puts on a calico gown, which was built 17 years ago, and cost 18 cents a yard."

Juvenile customer, doubtfully: "I'm afraid you haven't any ribbon of the kind I want. Mamma said I must be sure to ask for mouse color." Salesman, equal to the emergency, producing a bolt of fiery red ribbon: "That's what this is—crushed mouse color. How many yards?"

The household is woman's kingdom, and all that pertains to it is under her jurisdiction and direction. By this it is meant to say that the administrative regulation of details is hers, and that she should be left in the complete enjoyment of it as well as to the responsibility and care.

The Viceroy of Fukien and Chekiang, provinces of China, has issued a proclamation against the drowning of female children, which has been a common occurrence of late. He says that hereafter the penalty provided by law will be strictly enforced. The penalty is 80 blows of the bamboo and one year's banishment.

Maude: Algernon, you know a year ago I told you I would not marry you until you had saved $10,000. Algernon: "Yes, but—" Maude: "And six months ago I told you I thought we could get along on $1000." Algernon: "But still—" Maude: "Well, how much have you by this time?" Algernon: "Exactly $26.62." Maude: "Don't you think that—that—that is near enough?"

Masculinities.

He who knows nothing is confident in everything.

Experience and wisdom are the two best fortune-tellers.

The Pope has had his large bed-room filled with singing birds.

"Do you live within your income?" "No; I live without one."

The man who is given to sober reflection seldom gets into a tight place.

A man absolutely sincere is a very rare specimen of civilized humanity.

Laziness is a good deal like money—the more a man has of it the more he seems to want.

Preacher: "Ye generation of vipers!" Umpire, waking up: "No back talk there—ten dollars!"

Persons whose favorite occupation is rolling a lawn mower cannot be said to be wanting in push.

Rev. Ellis Howell, of Marshall, Ill., has united in marriage one thousand couples. He is in his 80th year.

It is said that the common cowcatcher attachment to locomotives is about the only article of universal use that was never patented.

Rev. Dr. Primrose: "Experience is a great teacher." Giles. "Yes; but it teaches us a great many things we would sooner not know."

All gentlemen throughout the world are brothers, it is true, for to be a gentleman is to be brave, honest and courteous, and nothing more.

When a certain bachelor was married the members of his club "broke him up" by sending him as a wedding-present a copy of "Paradise Lost."

"How can you tell a poor cigar without smoking it, Smith?" "By looking at the picture on the box, my friend. If the picture is pretty the cigar is bad."

"Gus" Witherspoon, colored, of Yorkville, S. C., recently, on a small wager, ate seven dozen fried eggs in four hours. He died next day in great agony.

A father's feelings. He: "What did your pater say when you told him we were engaged?" She: "Oh, you must not ask me to repeat such language!"

Frederick L. Ames is the richest man in Boston. He is the son of Oliver and the nephew of Oakes Ames, and is worth $30,000,000. Part he inherited and part he made.

A young man from Philadelphia has lost his job as school-teacher in Accomac county, Va., by chucking the girls under their chins in study hours and kissing them at recess.

John H. B. Latrobe is the oldest practicing lawyer in the United States. He is 86 years old, and was admitted to the bar 65 years ago. Mr. Latrobe is the father of Baltimore's Mayor.

Hopeful: "You should not despair, young man. There are great opportunities ahead of you." Sadleigh: "Yes, I know; but they are so far ahead of me I fear I shall never overtake them."

Mr. N. Peck: "I think if anyone is entitled to a pension it's me." Madge: "You were never in the war, were you?" Mr. N. Peck: "No, but the fellow my wife was engaged to got killed at Shiloh."

A countryman had consulted a fortune-teller as to his fortune. "You'll be poor, kind sir, until you're 30," was the prediction of the Pythoness. "And then?" "Oh, after that you'll get used to it."

Patrick Whalen, aged 80 years, reached Pittsburg a few days ago, and told the police authorities that he had walked all the way from New York. He was in search of a son who, he thought, lived in the "Smoky City."

A European savant says that life may be indefinitely prolonged by regularly drinking the juice of the lemon. And another European savant, who knows just as much—or as little—says that the surest way to shorten life is to drink lemon juice.

The doctor: "I think, my dear sir, that it would be better to have a consultation; your wife is seriously ill." Anxious husband: "There! I told my wife long ago she ought to have proper medical advice, but she was so afraid of hurting your feelings."

Irate father: "Young man, I am amazed, astounded, sir, that you should seek to marry my daughter on so short an acquaintance. You are almost a stranger to her." Young man: "Well, she don't take any more chances than I do. She's almost a perfect stranger to me, too."

The first "greenback," it is said, is in the possession of Edward Slocum, of New Richmond, Allegan county, Mich. It is dated August 1, 1862, marked Series A, No. 1. Mr. Slocum was a soldier in the army, and the bill in question was paid to him by the paymaster as part of his wages as a boy in blue.

A physician in Boston sounds a warning against the practice of chewing wooden toothpicks. He says the habit is responsible for much sickness. Small particles of the wood are swallowed and lodge frequently in the walls of the stomach, inducing gastric disturbance. He knows of several such cases which proved fatal.

Mr. Briggs: "I wonder what women will do next! I see in the paper that the women in the East are ruining their health nowadays by eating tea." Mrs. Briggs: "Do you suppose it is any worse than eating coffee? Every night you come home munching coffee, and it seems to make your nose redder and redder, to say nothing of the looks of your eyes."

A member of a certain Legislature, addressing the House upon the Frontier Question, thus expressed himself: "Such, Mr. Speaker, was the state of insecurity upon the Western frontier that I and other settlers have often gone to our daily avocations leaving our peaceful homesteads, our happy wives, our smiling children, to return in the evening to find our houses burnt over our heads, our wives widows, and our children fatherless."

Recent Book Issues.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The September *Century* contains an important and interesting paper on Napoleon Bonaparte, being contemporary accounts, by British officers, of the ex-Emperor's exile to Elba, his voyage to St. Helena and life on that island. The Lincoln instalment is crowded with new material, and has to do mainly with Lincoln's re-election. Justice Bradley of the Supreme Court has an article on Chief Justice Marshall, with a fine portrait by the French artist Memin. "Winged Botanists" is a beautifully illustrated article. An article on Japanese life by the American artist Mr. Wores is illustrated by reproductions of a number of his Japanese oil paintings. Mr. Paine presents an illustrated study of the identity of "The Pharaoh of the Exodus and his Son." George Kennan closes his account of "The Kara Political Prison." Another illustrated article is Emmet O'Brien's account of "Telegraphy in Battle." In fiction there is the second instalment of Joel Chandler Harris' "The Old Bascom Place," and complete stories by Geo. W. Cable and Mrs. Eichberg King. The departments maintain their usual interest.

AN ELECTRICAL PLANT.—It is stated that there has been discovered in the forests of India a strange plant which possesses to a very high degree astonishing magnetic power.

The hand which breaks a leaf from it receives immediately a shock equal to that produced by the conductor of an induction coil.

At a distance of six metres a magnetic needle is affected by it and will be quite deranged if brought near.

The energy of this singular influence varies with the hour of the day. All powerful about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, it is absolutely annulled during the night. At times of storm its intensity augments to striking proportions.

During rain the plant seems to succumb and bends its head during a thunder shower; it remains there without force or virtue, even if one should shelter it with an umbrella. No shock is felt at that time in breaking the leaves, and the needle is unaffected beside it.

One never by any chance sees a bird or insect alight on the electric plant; an instinct seems to warn them that they would there find sudden death.

It is also important to remark that where it grows none of the magnetic metals are found; neither iron, nor cobalt, nor nickel, an undeniable proof that the electric force belongs exclusively to the plant.

FOR MONEY'S SAKE.—It is recorded that an officer of rank at Vienna bequeathed the whole of his fortune to his nephew on the condition that he should never read a newspaper.

What a silly, farcical and absurd provision to interdict the reading that acquaints one with actual passing, daily arising incidents, and furnish food for the mind to consider and reflect upon for the improvement of society, the regulation of morals and stemming the tide of current vices so that we neither fall into dogged incredulity on one side or a fatal facility to belief on the other. Those trained to closest study of the press are most effective in dispelling errors or asserting truth, and are invaluable to society.

Some men in the greed for money and its easy possession, will sacrifice their honor, their peace, and well-being; but such a restriction as this of not reading the newspapers to possess it, passes all bounds of reason and good sense. A legacy coupled with such a condition would be rejected by any high-toned, conscientious man.

The life of a man without a newspaper would be narrowed and contracted, the understanding would be warped and he would live only in himself and for himself, without concern or care for the rest of mankind. L. G. W.

THE PRODIGAL SON.—"It always sort o' makes me feel sad and downhearted to read about the prodigal son in the Bible," said Farmer Silkens to his male offspring who was home on a summer vacation.

"Y-a-a-s."

"Yaws," echoed the old man, as his lips curled contemptuously, "he came back and says honorably and flat-footed, 'I've done wrong an' I want another chance.'"

"Y-a-a-s?"

"Yaws; he didn't come back to the farm pizenin' the very butterflies with the smoke from his siggerettes an' say, 'Pop, old boy, I'm dead broke; couldn't you let me have a twent to keep up my end with the fellers at the club?' Not much he didn't."

And the old man heaved a sigh and went out to feed the hogs.

KEEP UP THE APPETITE, and aid Digestion in every way, and you can overcome General Debility, and gradually recover strength. Dr. Jayne's Tonic Vermifuge is an excellent remedy for Indigestion, Sour Stomach, and Weakness of the Stomach, it is therefore the best of Tonics for young and old, and is an old-time Worm cure in addition. It drives these pests out of the body, and destroys the nests in which they breed. When a Tonic is wanted, the large-sized bottles are the cheapest.

BEHIND THE FOOTLIGHTS.

AN unemployed actor, disinclined to rust in idleness—to say nothing of starving—determined to "do the provinces" as an entertainer. The provinces, however, did not prove the happy hunting ground he had anticipated; and when he arrived at a certain small town in the north, his funds and his spirits were at a very low ebb.

The latter were not raised by the worthy who had the letting of the "hall" informing the peripatetic entertainer that a theatrical exhibition would be "nae gude at a' there;" but that if he gave a lecture on chemistry the place would be crowded.

At this straw the desperate actor clutched.

He would turn scientific lecturer—although he knew no more about chemistry than an ordinary tom cat—and take his chance.

If his ignorance was discovered, he would only have to bolt for it; if it was not, then his audacity would meet with its due reward.

The hall was engaged, the bills distributed, and his last pennies spent on red fire, brickdust, iron filings, and some innocent powders.

The time came, and the lecturer stood before a crowded audience, without any clear idea of what he was going to say or do, save that he was going to perform the old experiment of producing oxygen, and a new one of his own invention, which he hoped would bring the performance to a sudden end.

The friendly hallkeeper had borrowed a pestle and mortar, a Leyden jar, and two or three retorts, which, with a few physic bottles filled with bright colored waters, gave the table quite a scientific appearance.

The pseudo-savant commenced by reading a few pages of a popular treatise on the subject in hand, by way of introduction; and then, closing the book, trusted to impudence to pull him through. And pull him through it did.

He says—

"I explained, with many mispronounced words, the hydrogen experiment; and then it occurred to me to arrange a little accident, which would, perhaps make them nervous, and prepare them for what was going to follow. This I easily did by thrusting a retort neck downwards into the fire; the few drops of water condensed, and burst with a loud report. I then proceeded to explain the dangerous nature of chemicals, dwelt on gun cotton, sudden death of experimentalists by fumes, etc., meanwhile filling my mortar with brickdust and other harmless ingredients.

"Having worked the audience up to the required pitch of nervousness, I dilated on the dangerous and uncertain nature of the compound I was mixing, and spoke of my bad health, and wound up by saying, Startling and marvellous as the announcement may seem, it is nevertheless true that were I to leave off stirring this mixture for one single moment, the whole of this building and every one therein would be blown into unrecognizable atoms!'

"In less than two minutes there was not a soul left in the place except Mr. Macteggart and myself, who pitched the stuff away and cheerfully divided the profits."

Great is impudence, and it will prevail! The foregoing is a case in proof of this; and here is another:—

Some years ago one of the most popular of French comedians was Gintigny. He was clever, reckless, and eccentric; had a bad memory, but when it was in fault he could improvise—with impudence, but effect.

Gintigny once manifested his improvising powers in an extraordinary manner.

Passing in front of a certain theatre, he saw the name of his friend Chevilly in the playbill. Gintigny entered by way of the stage door and asked to see him.

He was told that Chevilly was on the stage and could not be spoken to; he was acting in Ponsard's *Charlotte Corday*.

Gintigny thereupon, to the indignant astonishment of the manager, coolly walked forward to the side of Chevilly as the latter was repeating the famous lines which, in English run—

"No, I cannot credit it
That all is ended when we have no king;
That is the true commencement."

As Chevilly concluded these words, he stared in inexpressible surprise at Gintigny, and exclaiming, "What, you here!" shook him cordially by the hand, as if both were in a private room, and not in the presence of an audience, whose perplexity was not lessened by observing the two, utterly regardless of Ponsard's play, and the calls of the manager and prompter, begin to talk of their private affairs, walking up and down the stage the while. At length Gintigny said—

"I'm afraid I'm intruding?"

"Not at all," said Chevilly.

"I am sure I am," rejoined Gintigny; "so farewell. When you have finished you will find me at the cafe next door."

The eccentric player had reached the wing, when he returned and said—

"By-the-bye, before we part, suppose we sing something together?"

"With all my heart," was the reply: and both of them, standing before the footlights, sang a verse from some old vaudeville, on the pleasure of old friends meeting unexpectedly—a song which used to bring the curtain down with applause.

At this duet the public entered into the joke—they could not hiss for laughing—and the most joyous uproar reigned among them. Till Gintigny retired as if nothing had happened, and Chevilly attempted seriously to resume his part in *Charlotte Corday*.

Here is another story of Gintigny, which brings out the serious side of his experiences:—

One morning in February, 1869, some country folk returning from market at Tarbes saw a man stretched fast asleep on the steps of the theatre. It was early dawn, and snow was falling; and the kindly peasants, fearing the man would be frozen to death, gently shook him, and asked what he was doing there.

"Well," said Gintigny—for it was he—"I am waiting for the manager;" and he turned round to go to sleep again.

Later in the day he shook himself, by way of toilet and breakfast, and made his call upon the manager.

"My name," he said, "is Albert Gintigny. I am a comedian and a poet. At the present moment I have no money, and am terribly hungry. Have you any vacancy in your company—leading tragedian or lamp cleaner—I don't care what it is?"

The manager asked if he was perfect in the part of Pylades.

"Thoroughly so!" was his emphatic answer.

"All the better," said the manager; we play *Andromaque* to-night; my Pylades is ill. You will replace him. Good morning!"

When the evening came Gintigny put on the Greek costume and went on to the stage without knowing a single line of the part.

This was nothing, though; and when his turn came, he improvised a little reply to Pyrrhus.

Gintigny now and then during the play had a line too short by a syllable or two, but he made up for it by putting a syllable or two over measure in the line that followed. The audience was not aware of anything unusual.

The manager, who at first was ready to tear his hair from his head, wisely let Gintigny take his own course; and when the play was ended, he offered the eccentric fellow an engagement, at the (to him) stupendous salary of $300 a month!

When Charles Webb was "starring" at the Chatham Theatre in New York, he became acquainted with a tailor named Thomas Shapleigh, who had in his younger days belonged to a juvenile dramatic company, and felt very much inclined to tread the boards again, if a chance offered. It did offer.

The actor cast for Polonius on Webb's benefit night was unable to play, and Shapleigh undertook to supply his place.

The house was packed; and the beneficiare, and the friend who had, as the bill put it, "magnanimously volunteered his services," were received with loud acclamations.

The first act went off smoothly enough; but in the second—when, on Polonius asking, "Do you know me, my lord?" Hamlet replies, "Excellent well; you are a fishmonger—" Mrs. Shapleigh, sitting in a front box, exclaimed, in a loud and angry tone—

"Well, it ain't very pretty of you, Mr. Webb, after Tom as been so good to you, to go showing him up in that way; I'd have you know that a fishmonger, as you call him, is as good as an old actor any day!"

When she ceased, a wondering silence fell upon the spectators; and Shapleigh, moving to the wing, gave his wife an assuring nod, and said—

"It's all right, Bessie; it's so in the book."

Then, understanding matters, the audience vociferously applauded.

Jefferson's first stage speech was not "so in the book." He played the infant in *Pizarro*, and when Cora said to Alonzo, "Sweet child! he will speak soon," she was not prepared for the instant fulfilment of her prophecy by the "infant" toddling to the footlights and asking the leader of the orchestra why he did not play his fiddle!

IN THE FAR NORTH.

There is perhaps no country in Europe richer in legendary lore than Norway. Until recent years, the communication of the dwellers in the more remote country districts with the outside world was small indeed, and old-time superstitions have lingered long and die hard among these simple and credulous people.

There is a belief among the peasantry that the saeters or upland farmhouses, which are inhabited in the summer by those who are banished at that season to the high and distant pastures to look after the cattle, are in the winter taken possession of by a race of little people, who are resentful of any interference with their privileges, and are offended if the cattle are brought up earlier or kept later than usual.

There are in Norway large barrows on the hillsides, which have been found to contain swords and arrow-heads, the weapons of an earlier race of inhabitants.

These have probably given rise to the stories which are current of the existence in former times of a race of giants, who in quite recent days have occasionally appeared, and wrought mischief on those who fell into their hands.

In the Evil One and his works and appearances upon earth the people have, or had within quite recent times, quite as strong a faith as had our own ancestors a few centuries back; and some of the clergy were supposed to be in league with him.

There is a story told of a priest who lived at Dale, and was supposed to practice the black art. We visited his old church, situated near the picturesque village of Dosen, on the banks of the fjord.

It is a curious old stone-built edifice, and in it is hung a picture of this severe-looking priest with his wife and seven children. He frequently indulged in nocturnal rambles, and the rumor was current that at such times he was not engaged in business that could bring any good; so his wife became alarmed, and begged an old maid-servant to follow him.

The idea entered the man's head that he would give his master a fright, and cure him of his love of strolling about alone at night; so he managed to procure one of his mistress's night-dresses; and having discovered the preacher standing on a flat rock by the roadside, he suddenly appeared in his ghostly disguise.

The priest demanded who he was; and receiving no answer, muttered some cabalistic words, and as a result of them, the man sank up to his knees in the rock.

The priest repeated the question, and again there was no answer, so this time the man became entombed to his middle; and on refusing to disclose himself on the third demand, he sank to his shoulders.

Thoroughly frightened, the poor fellow confessed all; but the priest declared that it was too late, as his master had claimed him; and the victim disappeared altogether.

We were also told of another priest who had dealings with the Evil One, and who was condemned at Christiania and condemned to die.

He begged hard for his life, and was only reprieved on condition that he would exhibit his supernatural powers by preaching the same day in Trondhjem Cathedral, some three or four hundred miles away. This he promised to do; and, summoning a bad spirit, said to him:

"How fast can you carry me to Trondhjem?"

He replied:

"As fast as a horse can go."

But that would not do; so he called a second spirit, who promised to take him as quickly as a bird could fly. But his offer, too, was declined.

A third spirit promised to take him as quick as a thought, on condition that he might have the souls of all who went to sleep during the parson's sermon. He hastily closed with the offer, and they started.

The Evil One went round the coast, and when out at sea, endeavored to make the priest repeat the name of God, knowing that if he did so he should be compelled to drop him. But the priest was too sharp to be caught napping, and only urged his unwilling steed to greater exertions.

When they arrived at Trondhjem, the sermon was delivered; but so earnest and powerful was the preacher, that, contrary to custom, not a soul went to sleep, and the Evil One was cheated of his prey.

These are specimens of the tales believed in and told round the blazing pine-logs during the long and dreary nights of winter.

Many more stories, doubtless, might be collected and preserved, if only some among the increasing number of summer tourists to this lovely land, which is now being brought so close to us by the fast and commodious steamers of the ocean and other lines, would take the trouble to look out for and record them.

Education is now compulsory in Norway; ignorance is fast disappearing, and with it many of the old beliefs of the people; so that in all probability these old legends of folklore will soon be lost.

THE DEADLY TOOTHPICK.—"Do you know," said a physician, "that the great American habit of toothpick chewing is responsible for a very large number of human ills?

If you have ever noticed these things much you have observed that a good many people who take their meals at restaurants or hotel cafes, and rush out immediately afterward to business, snatch on the way a toothpick, sometimes several of them, and thrust the little wooden spears into the mouth.

In nine cases out of ten they don't use the toothpick quickly and as a matter of business, but they retain it in the mouth after all necessity for its functions has ceased.

They chew on it and wobble it about under the jaws, and finally the piece of wood is reduced to a ragged pulp, and then it is usually cast away.

Very frequently small particles of the wood are swallowed, and I know one man who was in the habit of eating his toothpick.

I became acquainted with him because he wanted me to give him something to heal his stomach, which was really in a lacerated condition.

The small particles of wood that are swallowed frequently lodge in the walls of the stomach somewhere and induce gastric disturbance. I know several cases which proved fatal."

In some weddings, tears—usually called of joy—are quite common. They start with the bride, extend to her family, and wind up by including everybody except the groom. He never weeps. There is no instance recorded in history where the husband wept—at the wedding. But Nature, both in fact and fiction, is generally supposed to make all things even at last, and there is very little reason for doubting, sooner or later, his turn comes.

Charity is not action; it is life.

Humorous.

THE TRAMP.

I wander away at the dawn of the day
From the City of Nothing to Do;
I rescue a crust from the dirt and the dust,
And a hat that the sun shines through.

From ashpits and "shoots" I pick up my boots,
And beg an old coat on the way;
I care not a jot if it fits me or not,
So long as there's nothing to pay!

My carpet is grass, and the moon is my gas;
My bedroom is deep in the wood;
I sleep in my clothes in the manner I 'spose
That one of my calibre should.

I wash in the lake for propriety's sake,
And I wipe with a towel of straw;
My glass is the pool, where I look as a rule,
And my comb is a cockatoo's claw!

Perhaps you may smile, but my table's a stile,
With a newspaper napkin and cloth;
I beg what I can for the innermost man,
But I have an objection to broth.

I never encroach where it's wicked to poach,
For it's better the law to obey.
Perhaps we have met; may you never forget
That I wished you a pleasant "Good-day!"

—U. S. Nown.

Getting the news—Stealing a paper.

An engagement ring—A lot of match making mammas.

Dry weather—That part of the day when a man is most thirsty.

To cut your poor relations "dead," don't mention them in your will.

Calling names—A mother shouting for her son over the back fence.

Considering how little the bell knows, it is wonderful how much it has tolled.

A license is necessary both in marriage and in selling liquors. This is because they are at first intoxicating, and afterwards likely to result in a fight.

Tramp, to lady of the house: "I am starving to death! Can I die out in the barnyard?" Lady, graciously: "Yes; if you won't crawl under the barn."

Old fireplaces are coming into fashion, but it seems likely the style adopted by Lucifer somewhat previous to Adam, will have as little said in its favor as ever.

A floating newspaper paragraph says that a Halifax lady, aged 80, has just begun taking piano lessons. Even the old and feeble can get square with their neighbors when they go about it right.

"What has happened to you? You look vexed." "I should say so. This morning I was just very angry about something, when some one spoke to me; and I have been trying the whole day to think what I was going to be angry about, and I can't do it."

Mistress: "Erasmus, you are sure these are spring chickens?" Erasmus: "Yes, missus. Dey whar brought in right under my own eye." Mistress: "You watched them growing all last spring?" Erasmus: "Yes, missus, an' all the spring afore dat! Yah, dey is spring chickens."

A gentleman was once lamenting to a friend the conduct of his son. "You should speak to him with firmness, and remind him of his duties," said the other. "He pays no attention to what I say. He listens only to the advice of fools." Then, with a sudden thought, "I wish you would speak to him!"

"This world is pretty evenly divided, after all," said the butcher, as he scraped away at his block. "How?" "Lady in the diamonds and sealskin gets out of her carriage and comes in here and inquires for 'sausag.'" "Well?" "Well, other folks have the money, and us butchers have the education. Makes me feel more content."

An expressman was busily loading his wagon one hot noontide, and as he piled the bundles high an assistant appeared in haste, carrying a small dog in his outstretched hands. "Well," said the first man, sharply, as he took him, "where's he to go?" "I don't know." "Don't know?" "No, I don't; nor nobody don't. He's eat up his tag."

"Well, sir, you heard me sing 'Masaniello' yesterday. Are you ready to engage me?" "I don't know. Your voice was very heavy. You were almost hoarse." "In heaven's name, don't you understand that I am a realistic player! Don't you see that 'Masaniello' was a fisherman, and almost all day in the water? He must have had a continual cold."

Some difference. Daughter: "But, mamma, you ought not to object to Charley on account of his poverty. I'm sure he has as much money as father had when he married you. I've often heard you say you were as poor as church mice when you got married." Mother: "You must remember, my dear, that your father had a good deal of horse sense, which Charley hasn't."

A musician, who is famous for playing practical jokes, wrote to a friend of his a short time back thus: "Dear ——, I expired suddenly on Wednesday last, and am to be buried on Tuesday next. Can you come to the funeral? Shall be glad to see you. Yours, ——," To which the friend replied: "Dear ——, Should be happy to come to your funeral next Tuesday, but, unfortunately, I died last Friday myself. Yours, ——."

Dr. J. A. Gunn, who was nominated for Coroner of Furnas county, Omaha, by the Republicans, has declined to accept in a card, in which he says: "If I might legally dictate during my term in the office who should furnish the cold and clammy corpses over whom I should preside, then I would rather be Coroner than President. However, as I am not allowed, if elected, to dictate the distribution of the patronage, I respectfully, but positively, decline the nomination."

THE BEST SCHOLAR.—A story is told of a school mistress' success in drawing out the latent genius of an intractable pupil. Nobody had been able to do anything with him. Punishment had no effect, appeals to his pride and notes to his mother were unavailing.

The teacher studied the boy, watched him closely that she might find the key to his character.

One day she saw him catch a fly. His dull countenance lighted up, while with the kindest interest he for fifteen minutes examined the insect.

The teacher had discovered one road to the boy's mind. "Boys," said she, not long after, "What can you tell me about flies?"

The brightest boy could tell very little. Then she turned to the dolt, and saw that, for the first time, his enthusiasm was kindled by something going on in school.

He forgot his indifference, and became eloquent in describing the wings, feet, eyes, head and habits of the fly. Both teacher and scholars were greatly astonished.

The teacher saw the bent of his genius, and put books of natural history into his hands.

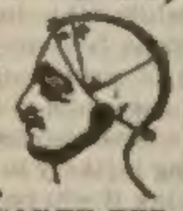
Then she led him by degrees to see the necessity of preparing himself for his favorite pursuit by learning something of grammar, geography and mathematics.

The dunce of the school became one of the best scholars, and in later years an eminent naturalist.

APOLOGY.—It is not always necessary to make apologies to others for our misconduct. Some of it concerns only ourselves and must rest with our own consciences. But where a wrong has been done to another, or where the welfare of society for any reason demands it, let the apology be full and sincere. Oftener than we think for, it should consist of simple confession; but, where the other element of extenuation rightly comes in, let it never exceed its just boundaries. The willingness to admit the actual wrong or injury to the full extent that truth can demand is always the best apology, and often the only reparation that can be made; while the discipline thus afforded is an important part of self-culture and improvement.

DOLLARD & CO.,

1223 CHESTNUT ST., Philadelphia. Premier Artists IN HAIR.



Inventors of the celebrated GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG and ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. Over the crown of the head.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also **Dollard's Regenerative Cream**, to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER,
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov. 28, '83. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, or Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best Wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS,
Ex-Member of Congress, 8th District.

I have used constantly for more than twenty-five years, "Dollard's Herbanium," for removing dandruff and dressing my hair, also for the relief of nervous headaches. I have found it a delightful article for the toilet, and cheerfully testify to the virtues claimed for it. I would not be without it.

JAMES B. CHANDLER,
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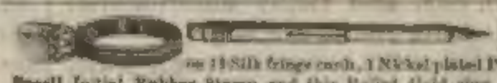

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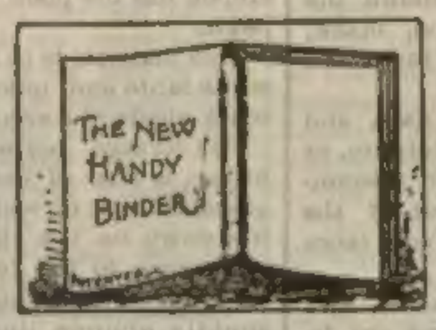

Very nearly, if not quite all of our readers, would like to preserve their copies of THE POST if it could be done easily, neatly and effectively. Its size makes it specially adapted for convenient and tasteful binding, so that by the proper means, it can be made a neat volume for future reference or preservation, and at the same time an attractive and pretty ornament for the centre table. This means of binding THE POST proposes to furnish in offering to its subscribers one of the "NEW HANDY BINDERS," now so popular, and which are unquestionably the most perfect and handsome articles of the kind ever produced.

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This HANDY BINDER will be sent, all postage paid, on receipt of 75 cents, or free as a premium to any of our present subscribers who send us the name of a new subscriber and $2.00.

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This Can Be Done by Means of the

INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE to the PIANO or ORGAN.

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys. Thus the player has the full effect of the base and treble clefs, together with the power of making correct and harmonious chords in accompaniments. It must be plainly understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book, and without previously needing to know the difference between A or G, a half-note or a quarter-note, a sharp or a flat. The Guide is placed on the instrument, and the player, without reference to anything but what he is shown by it to do, can in a few moments play the piece accurately and without the least trouble. Although it does not and never can supplant regular books of study, it will be of incalculable assistance to the player by "ear" and all others who are their own instructors. By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide, we repeat, will not learn how to read the common sheet music. But it will teach those who cannot spend years learning an instrument, how to learn a number of tunes without EITHER PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OR STUDY. A child if it can say its A, B, C's and knows a tune—say "The Sweet Bye and Bye"—can play it, after a few attempts, quite well. There are many who would like to be able to do this, for their own and the amusement of others, and to such we commend The Guide as BOUND TO DO for them ALL WE SAY. Its cheapness and usefulness, moreover, would make it a very good present to give a person, whether young or old, at Christmas. Almost every home in the land has a piano, organ or melodeon, whereon seldom more than one of the family can play. With this Guide in the house everybody can make more or less good use of their instruments.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. (Postage stamps, U's, taken.) For Ten Cents extra a music book, containing the words and music for 100 popular songs, will be sent with The Guide. Address

THE GUIDE MUSIC CO.,
726 SANSOM ST., PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Latest Fashion Phases.

Very dressy mantles are made of armure ornamented with rich silk and gold or silver passementerie, and opening in front over a blouse of crepe de Chine; the long open sleeves are covered with embroidery, and fall over under-sleeves, which are also decorated in the same way.

Travelling mantles are chiefly made of broche woollens, either as redingotes or as long loose mantles, with Jaive sleeves, falling from the shoulder to the edge of the skirt.

These sleeves are lined with satin to match and are frequently ornamented with raised embroidery representing flowers and foliage.

As small vetements, short mantles with flat hoods, and pelerines formed of a series of overlapping capes, are very fashionable. These are also enriched with embroidery, but in a different style, Byzantine designs being adopted for them.

Newer even than these are the crossed fichus made of braided cloth, the braiding being generally in a lighter shade than the cloth; the fichu forms a moderately deep cape at the back with a turned-down collar ending in revers.

The fronts are crossed on the chest, and the narrow ends meet at the waist behind, under a ribbon sash with very long ends. This is a charming vetement for young ladies, and is made of beige cloth, or of the dress material.

Lace dresses will be much worn, but only as plain skirts trimmed round the edge with several rows of ribbon, black, like the lace, and either of moire or satin.

Woollen laces are quite out of date, and draped skirts of Chantilly, silk guipure, or other black laces, are no longer fashionable. The most stylish dresses of the kind are made of Greek net with very large meshes.

Travelling dresses are conspicuous, and as usual, fine mohairs and alpacas are favorite materials for these costumes.

A good model is in steel-gray alpaca; the skirt is pleated throughout, the corsage perfectly plain, except for a plastron of thick gray silk.

The jacket to accompany the dress is of prune cloth; it fits the figure closely, and is trimmed with black passementerie brandenbourgs. The toque is of gray straw trimmed with gray and black striped ribbon and white wings.

The simplest and plainest of tailor-made dresses are also prepared in fine, light cloth. The foundation skirt is of silk, the cloth over-skirt is absolutely plain, with a deep hem at the edge lined with muslin and ornamented with from thirteen to seventeen rows of stitching.

The back breadths are in pleats, the corsage is cut like the bodice of a riding habit, with a small plain basque at the back and a double row of buttons in front. The collar is straight and high, the sleeve plain and close-fitting—quite different both in cut and style from the sleeves of ordinary dresses.

The influence of the French Exhibition on the modes of the day is shown in several ways, but chiefly in the great use that is made of the brocades, the outcome of the magnificent display of those fabrics in the Lyons court.

The most superb brocades are in Louis XV. patterns, with flowers and foliage in sprays or in wreaths forming wide stripe; these are usually associated with broche in similar patterns, but in much smaller size, and in shades of the same color as the ground.

The Princesse dress, with its demi-train, is made of the more showy flowered brocade, while the skirt and corsage ornaments are of the self colored fabric.

As an example, a Princesse dress may be cited, made of an exquisite gray-blue silk brocade, with a scattered pattern of pink and pale gold-colored chrysanthemums.

The corsage is fastened diagonally to the waist under a jabot of lace, the sides are opened to show the under-skirt, the back is slightly trained.

The under-skirt, seen on each side, is of blue-gray silk, with a broche or damask pattern in the same shade. The sleeves are in two parts, and consist of a plain coat-sleeve matching the under-skirt, and an open hanging sleeve of the flowered brocade.

The exceedingly straight lines of this dress are to be found in the majority of fashionable toilettes, and draped costumes are daily becoming more exceptional, although many of the prettiest dresses worn in Paris are those of very light woollens embroidered at the edge, which are frequently made with slight draperies.

A very stylish dress of this description is a costume of the finest woollen diagonal in a dead-leaf shade, with a blouse front and skirt cut in one, and richly embroidered with shaded silk round the edge.

The fulness of the blouse is drawn away a little to the right side of the waist, to form easy folds across the front of the skirt, which is also caught up a little at the waist on the left side showing the edge of the under-skirt, which is also embroidered.

The remainder of the skirt is straight, and very slightly trained at the back. The corsage is completed by a little open jacket embroidered all over, with plain long sleeves to correspond, and short draped over-sleeves of plain material reaching to the elbow.

Nearly all the newest walking dresses are made with the skirt resting an inch or two on the ground at the back; it is hardly to be called a train as yet, but is a step in that direction; and, although the length is inconvenient for walking, it has the merit of depriving plain undraped skirts of the rather tub-like appearance they assume when short all round.

In substantial materials the effect is excellent, and at present the slight train is only adopted with silk or woollen fabrics.

Very light woollens, such as voile and mousseline de laine, and thin silks, pongee and foulard for instance, are exempted from the rule, but a charming dress in swallow and white pekin silk and white crepon has the plain trained skirt of the pekin.

This material is in rather wide stripes of white faille and moire in the dark blue-black shade of a swallow's wings.

The corsage, perfectly plain and tight-fitting, is also of the pekin, but a long, graceful tunic of white crepon falls from low down on the right shoulder, crosses the figure to the left hip, forming easy folds across the front, and then falls in a slightly oblique line to the edge of the skirt.

The whole length, from shoulder to hem, is enriched with dark silk graduated embroidery, the pattern becoming larger as it approaches the edge. On the right side the tunic is draped, and ends under the pleats of the skirt.

The plain under-sleeves are of pekin, but draperies of white crepon, edged with embroidery, ornament the upper part as far as the elbow, and are allowed to droop a little at the shoulder to show the top of the pekin sleeve.

Another style of draped dress worth mentioning is the *robe surprise*, which is particularly useful, as it is either a plain or dressy toilette to suit the need of the moment.

The costume itself is of light-colored cashmere, willow-green is a favorite shade and is made with a perfectly plain skirt mounted in wide pleats; the corsage is a jacket, tight-fitting at the back, but with loose, straight fronts fastened from the neck to the edge.

Nothing could be plainer, but the dress can be converted into a smart toilette in a moment in the following manner:—

The jacket fronts are unfastened and turned back, disclosing a draped chemisette of pink crepe de Chine tucked inside the top of a corselet bodice of willow-green armure embroidered with silk and gold.

The skirt is next caught up on each side and fastened up on the tournure to show a petticoat of green armure embroidered with silk and gold like the corselet.

This "Surprise Dress" is made in all sorts of colors and materials, and is one of the greatest successes of the season; its extreme usefulness is not to be denied.

Odds and Ends.

ARTISTIC NEEDLEWORK.

Among the various kinds of work which are at the present moment being introduced as novelties, there are two or three which are decidedly revivals of the fancy work in vogue fifty or sixty years ago, and with which our grandmothers employed their leisure time after having finished that most important business of the day, the superintendence of the mysteries of the still-room, such as the making of preserves, brewing home-made wine and cordials, or perhaps the preparation of washes for "mending the complexion," similar to those to which our dear old friend Dr. Primrose had such a "natural antipathy."

One of these old-fashioned kinds of work which has lately reappeared is commenced by placing fine muslin over Brussels or bobbin net.

A bold design of leaves, flowers and scrolls is then traced on the muslin, and afterwards worked in buttonhole-stitch with bright-colored silks, the veining of the leaves and centres of flowers being worked in crewel-stitch. The superfluous muslin is then cut away, leaving the pattern on the net.

Sometimes instead of silk a narrow gold braid, firmly sewed on, defines the pattern, the veinings, &c., being worked in gold thread; and in some cases, instead of muslin, net is used.

For instance, if the groundwork is of Brussels, the upper part could be of fine bobbin net; but, of course, when two nets are used, the pattern must be drawn upon paper or linen, and placed under the foundation.

This work is always lined with either silk or sateen of a pretty contrasting color, and is used for bereaunette covers, night-dress-cases, comb-bags, &c.

For anyone who is not afraid of rather a long piece of work, a bed-coverlet made with cream-colored muslin and net with the gold braid, and lined with coral-colored or china-blue silk, would be most effective.

Crochet!—We feel sure the very word will bring to many minds a vision of some cheerless lodging-house sitting-room, in which the principal attempt at decoration consists of a glass shade covering some impossible specimens of wax flowers or fruit, or the ghost-like remains of the centre ornament of a long since devoured wedding-cake, the finishing touch being given by the cold-looking white rags in which the top of each chair is enveloped.

Certainly, lately one's idea of crochet has been connected with what the landlady is generally pressed to call "antimacassars." Nevertheless, crochet is becoming fashionable again—only, as is frequently the case, the old friend comes to us with a new face, and that is happily, a colored one.

This work is now done in variously-colored cotton or fine wool (that which is called "Andalusian" works well). The patterns are similar to those formerly used, being either borderings or stars and medallions of contrasting hues joined together, and further embellished by having the designs "picked out" with silk, colored tinsel, or gold thread, and sometimes a few spangles are introduced.

A very effective centre for a dinner-table is made of Indian red plush, with a bordering of crochet in wool of the same shade richly embroidered with gold thread. The pattern being large and open, the white table-cloth shows through, and contrasts favorably with the color. This kind of work might also be utilized for summer quilts or cot covers.

We have also heard a whisper lately that tatting is likely to be revived, but I scarcely think it will become very popular, as it requires a larger amount of patience than most persons are blessed with.

Another kind of work which for a time entirely disappeared, but which always remained in favor with the Germans, is bead-work.

In consequence of the great improvement in the manufacture of beads, which can be had in almost as many colors and shades as embroidery silks, this work is now rendered most artistic, and beautiful specimens of it are being shown in the shops.

Veal Cutlets, Tomato Sauce.—Cut from a piece of leg of veal some slices three-eighths of an inch thick, and trim them pear shape to the size of cutlets; sprinkle them both sides with pepper and salt, and lay them in a well-buttered flat tin; put a buttered sheet of paper on the top of them, and put the tin in the oven just long enough to thoroughly cook the cutlets. Dispose them on a dish in a circle round a puree of tomatoes and serve.

Puree of Tomatoes.—Take a quantity of tomatoes, cut them into quarters, and remove from each the pips and watery substance it contains; put them into a saucepan with an onion, plenty of butter, salt, a laurel leaf and some thyme; add a few spoonfuls of either stock or gravy; keep stirring on the fire until they are reduced to a pulp. Pass this through a hair sieve. Put an ounce of butter into a saucepan, and mix with it on the fire two tablespoonfuls of flour; as soon as it begins to color add the tomato pulp, a little at a time, and keep stirring on the fire until the puree thickens.

Mashed Potatoes.—Boil some potatoes and pass them through a sieve. Put them into a saucepan with a good lump of butter and salt to taste; add a little milk, and work them well with a spoon on a slow fire for some minutes, adding small quantities of milk as they get dry.

Confidential Correspondents.

LOU.—The name Mary is Hebrew in its origin, and means bitter.

IVY.—You are not too young to form an engagement providing always you have your parents' consent.

EXERCISE.—It is said that the first society for the mutal loan of money for building purposes was started in Philadelphia in 1830.

R. W. P.—Quicksilver and mercury are the same thing. When alloyed with tin-foil in a careful manner it is used for looking-glasses.

A. K. Y.—Aqua-fortis is the common name for a chemical acid known as dilute nitric acid; when more concentrated, it is called spirits of nitre.

HELEN.—It would be useless as well as absurd to go on thinking at all seriously of a young gentleman who, after being engaged, has forsaken you.

APRIL.—We do not know and have never heard of a remedy for reducing large eyes to smaller proportions, nor for making prominent eyes recede into the head.

SUBSCRIBER.—You can make what inquiries you please, under what name you please, and if it is in our power to answer them for you, we will take the greatest pleasure in doing so.

REDFERN.—The circulating notes of a national bank are secured by bonds in the United States Treasury, but not the deposits. If a bank fails the depositors may lose their deposits.

JANET.—Latin is called a "dead language" because it is no longer a living, that is, a spoken language. It was spoken by the Romans, and served as the basis of the present Italian, French, Spanish and other languages.

E. H.—A gentleman assists a lady to mount on horseback by taking her left foot in his two hands and helping her to spring up, while she holds her right hand on the pommel, and lightly rests her left hand on the gentleman's shoulder.

S. A. A.—Confidence in public speaking can only be attained by habit and perseverance. The best way to begin is by reading aloud, and then to recite, before a select few, passages from the best works of our poets and orators. Diffidence by such means may be overcome.

B. A.—You can certainly acquire a thorough education by studying without a master. It will make but little, if any, difference what text-books you select; the main point is to study them thoroughly and make yourself a perfect master of every branch you pursue.

E. R. M.—It is difficult to advise any one what course to adopt in order to converse properly. You should read works affording information on useful subjects, and keep yourself well acquainted with the current events of the day through the medium of the newspapers.

LOLA.—A woman should not marry a man whom she does not love, especially when she loves another. It is a fearful risk also, for a woman to "marry for a home," as the saying is. She could not very well undertake to earn a home in a more laborious and galling manner.

NOCTE.—Officers executing a search warrant may break open the outer door of a house or place to be searched if not opened after a demand for that purpose, and they may also break open closets and trunks which are locked after the key has been demanded and not delivered.

M. M. M.—Bulwer, the novelist, in the glow of youth, fell in love with a pretty face, and made what he supposed was a love match. He soon found that love's young dream was a hideous reality—that his hopes of married happiness had turned, like Dead Sea fruit, to ashes. A separation soon followed, but she never ceased to be a painful feature in his life.

SCIOLIST.—Bats have two pectoral teats and the thumb separated from the fingers. They fly, but they have neither feathers or beak, they are covered with hair and have teeth. They breed living young and suckle with teats. Their wings are the drapery of their bodies, except when they stretch them to fly. They fly in the dark and avoid objects not by seeing, but by some other sense.

LILY OF THE VALLEY.—In the matter of the hot salt baths you had better consult a physician. That you were apparently benefited by them during your stay at the seaside, is no conclusive proof that they would be beneficial here in the city where all the conditions are different. A hot salt bath is practically a medical prescription and should not be taken or used by an invalid unless under advice. Sea-water is a composition of common salt, chloride of magnesia and sulphate of magnesia. The percentage varies in different parts of the ocean.

R. M. M.—Chicago's great fire originated in a small wooden barn from the upsetting, it has always been supposed, of a kerosene lamp; the buildings adjacent were almost entirely of wood, and as there were several lumber yards in the vicinity the flames readily spread to the better portion of the city, which was closely built up with stores and warehouses and public buildings. The fire started on Sunday night and continued all day Monday, the last house being reached on Tuesday morning. The area burned over, including streets, was 3½ square miles; 17,450 buildings were destroyed.

E. R. G.—If a lady loves you and you return her love, there is no need of trying to "regain her affections," for the reason that you cannot have lost them. If you are a suitable mate for her, we confess that it seems rather hard for the parents to break off the match. Your best course would probably be to see the lady, and after assuring yourself of her faithfulness, to so conduct yourself that her people in time will withdraw their opposition to your union. If she is determined on marrying you, she will be able to let them see it, and doubtless when they find her so firm in her resolution, they will no longer withhold their consent.

GAS LAMP.—If you do not know what love is now, you will no doubt know well enough what it means some day. Shakspeare says of love: Love is familiar, love is a devil; there is no evil angel but love. Love has twenty pair of eyes. Love is a smoke raised with the fumes of sighs. Love is and will aspire. Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind, and therefore is winged Cupid painted blind. So we have given you five definitions of love from our great poet, which we hope will satisfy you that if there is nothing substantial in the passion, there is at least a great deal of pleasure, and, unfortunately at times, no inconsiderable amount of pain.